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MEDITATIVE
—
HOURS.



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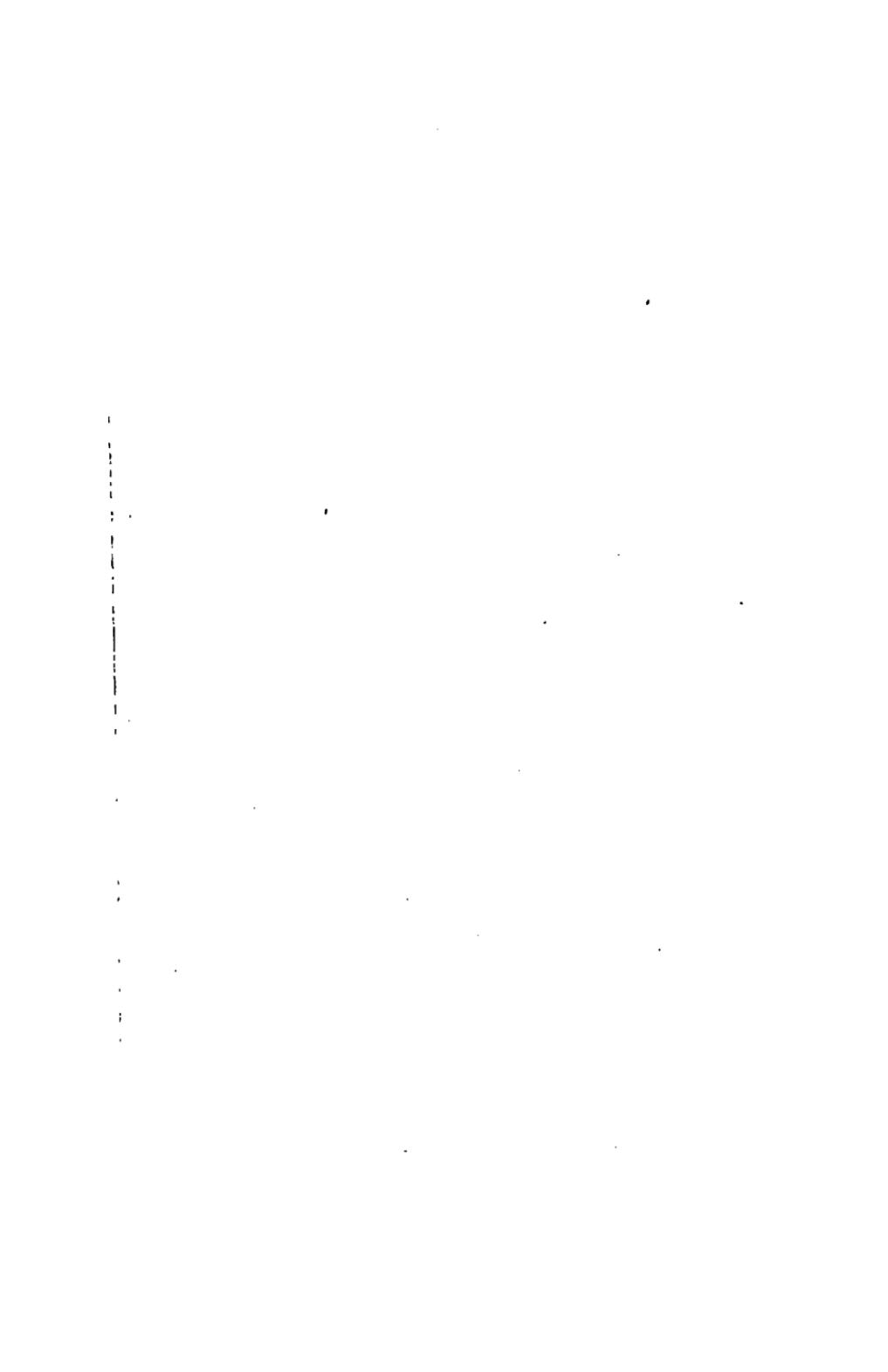


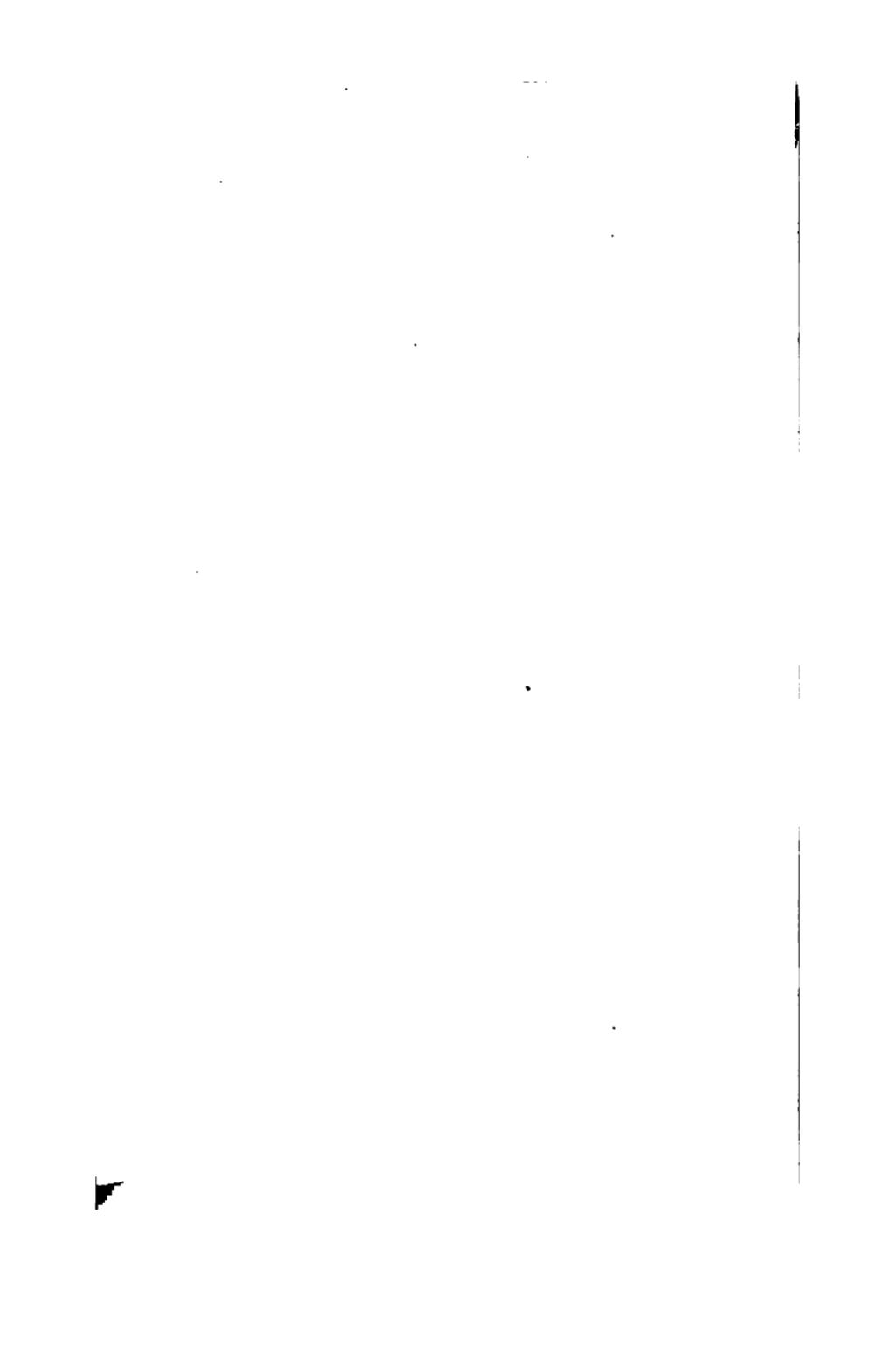
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MEDITATIVE HOURS

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

J. ROBERTSHAW,



Author of "Sketches and Traditions of the Yorkshire
Moorlands," &c.

"I to the woodland solitude would bend
My lonesome way—where Mirth's obstreperous shout
Shall not intrude to break
The meditative hour."

H. K. WHITE.

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of Yorkshire, he gives his book to a candid and indulgent public. His own estimation of his work is humble, and, therefore, if the place assigned to him by the critics be lowly, he shall be content to fill it; and shall feel little disappointment whatever judgment be pronounced by them, provided it be given in an unprejudiced, kind, and honest spirit.

To the nobility and gentry who have so kindly patronized this work;—to the gentleman who so courteously permitted its dedication to him; and to the numerous subscribers who have assisted the author in realizing his fond hopes, he tenders his grateful acknowledgments, and under their auspices he now launches his little bark on the ocean of mind, trusting that it may weather the storm that may await it, and eventually gain its “desired haven.”

J. R.

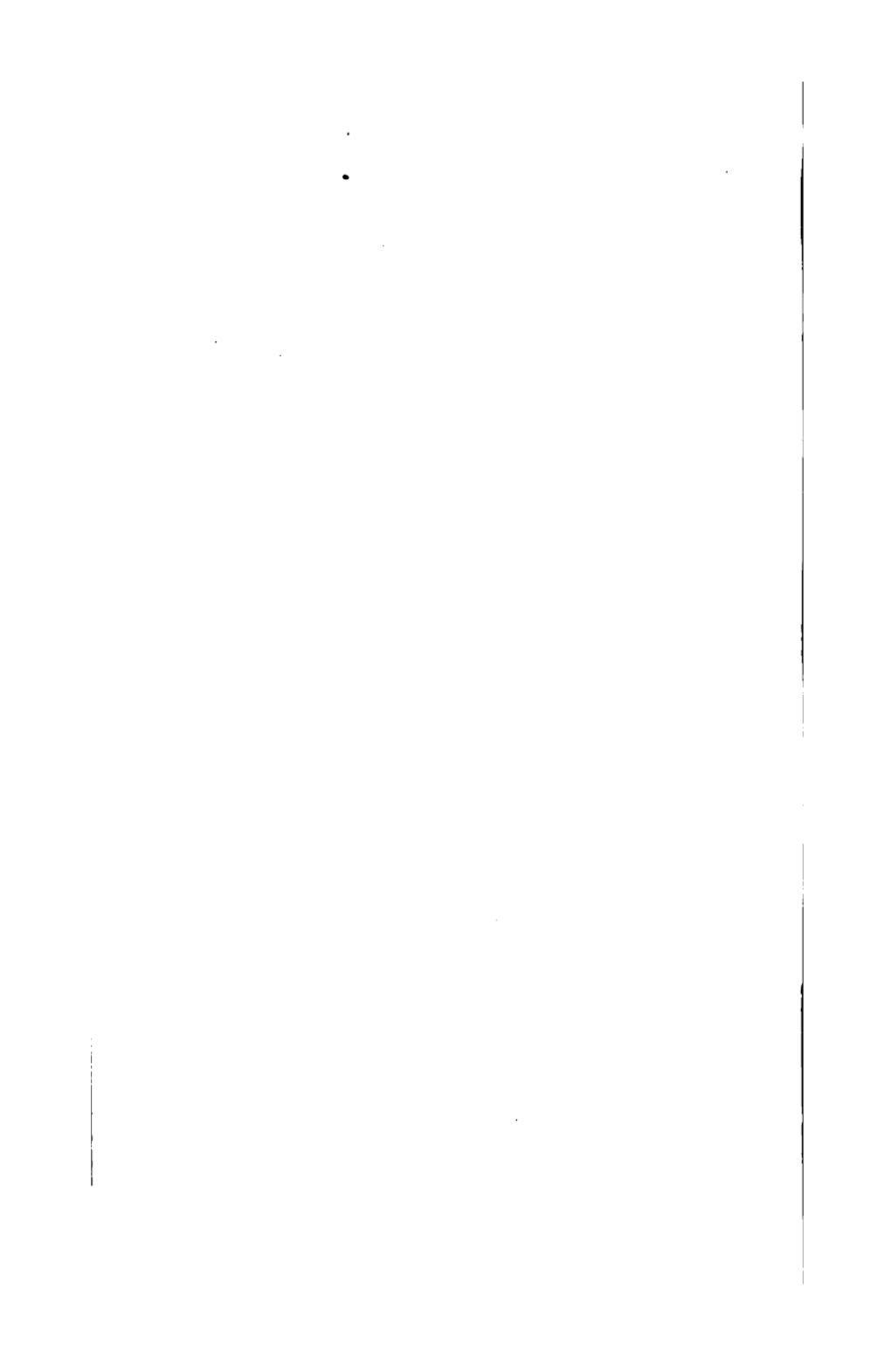
Keighley, Oct. 1st, 1856.

DEDICATORY SONNET

TO

FRANK CROSSLEY, Esq., M.P.

'TIS NOT FOR VALOROUS DEEDS DONE IN THE FIELD
OF SANGUINARY STRIFE; NOR THAT THY WORTH
IS THE MERE HOLLOW BOAST OF NOBLE BIRTH,
OR HOARDED GOLD; NOR THAT HIS HEART WOULD YIELD
THE MEED OF PRAISE TO THOSE WHO MERIT NONE,
THAT NOW THE BARD, O CROSSLEY! SINGS THY NAME;
'TIS THINE OWN GENEROUS DEEDS THAT GIVE IT FAME,—
FAME THAT WILL LIVE LONG AFTER THOU ART GONE
TO THY REWARD. THE WIDOW'S GRATEFUL HEART
WILL BLESS THEE, AND THY TOWNSMEN ALL UNITE
TO HONOR ONE WHO THUS DISPENSED A BRIGHT
THE GIFTS THAT HEAVEN SO RICHLY DID IMPART.
AND SINCE THIS FRUIT SPRINGS FROM TRUE PIETY,
THE POET SEEKS TO DEDICATE HIS LAYS TO THEE.



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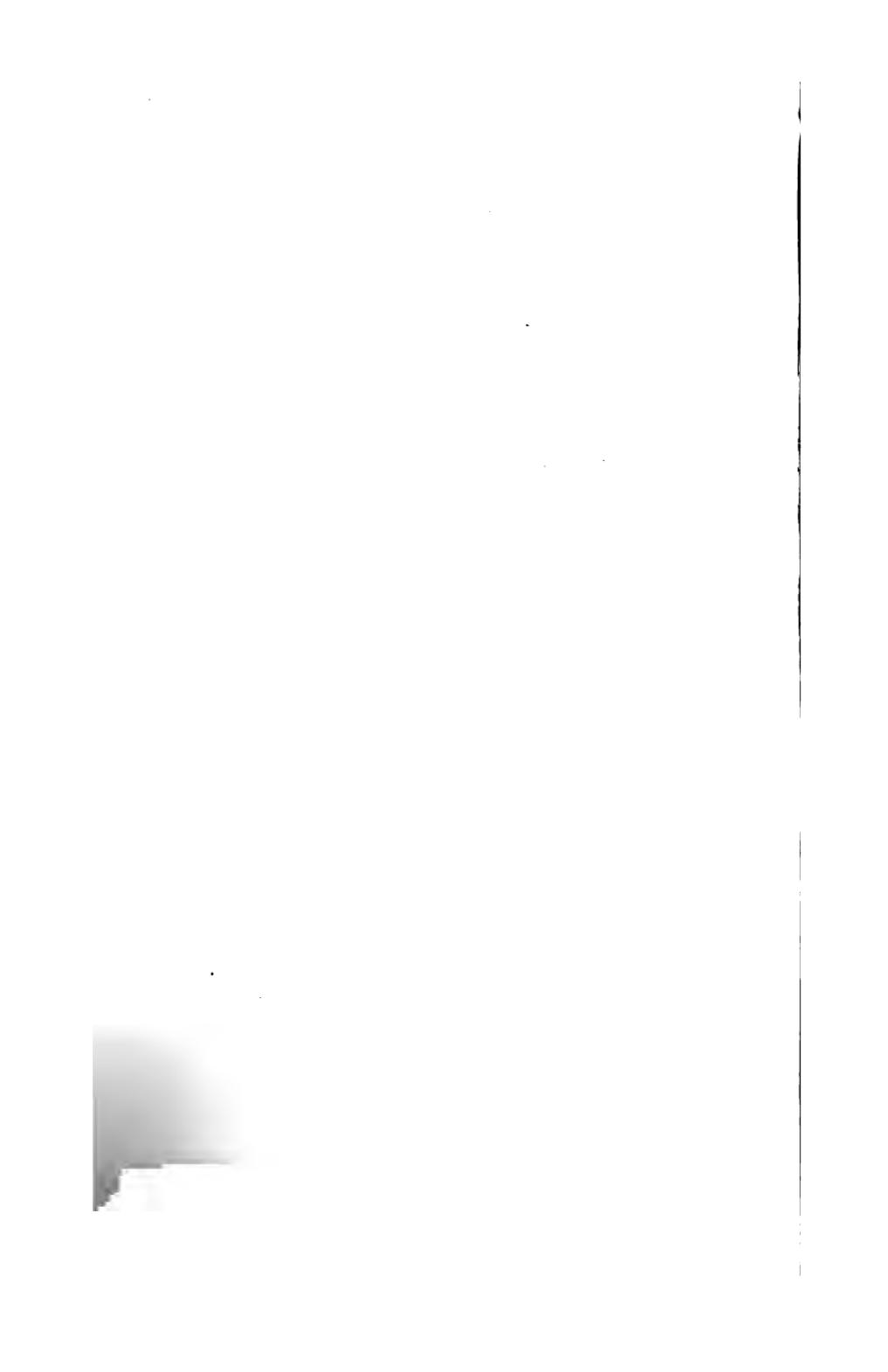
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Meditative Hours.



Meditative Hours.



TO POESY.

HAIL! poesy, thou lovely visitant
From Heaven's ethereal plains,
Sent forth by God to minister to man—
To heal his wounds, and soothe his pains.
Ten thousand welcomes to our sin-stained shore,
With thankful hearts we render thee;
Thou liftest up the veil that hides from view
The blissful scenes of immortality.

One of "the presence" of the Deity,
Attendant on His high behests ;
One of His favoured Oracles ! on thee
Each feature of His image rests.
Forth gushing from the throne of living light,
Onward through thy flowery region flows
The crystal stream of life, whose virtues give
To poor distressed humanity repose.

Upborne by thee the spirit mounts with joy
The "heights delectable !" from whence
The golden city's towers, and domes
Appear in rich magnificence.
I see the dazzling seraphs clothed in light
Resplendent, marshalled round THE THRONE,
Whereon in light ineffable—unseen,
The sovereign Lord of all things reigns alone.

I hear the Angel of His presence, high
Above the throng proclaiming loud
The fiats of Omnipotence ; when, lo !
Adoring low, a shining crowd
Of wingèd messengers to distant worlds,
Upon their various missions start,

To crumble into dust some despot's throne,
Or heal the wounds of some poor widow's heart.

·Oh ! hear ye not those blessed strains that come
Across that vast chaotic sea ;—
Those trumpet-blasts that peal through heaven's
blue vault,
Proclaiming boundless liberty ?
The harmony diffuses o'er the mind
The feelings of the blest in heaven,
And nerves the heart to strive with all the ills
Of life, as those who've reached its goal have striven.

I cannot bind my spirit down to earth,—
To time and sense—it must take wing—
With boldness soar, and quench its burning thirst,
At sacred Truth's unfailing spring.
The amaranthine bowers of Paradise—
Above that star-bespangled dome,
Which seems replete with God—smiling, invite
Earth's wearied ones to their unchanging bloom.

I love to rove, celestial maid ! with thee,
And all the works of God explore ;

Deign but the glance of thine immortal eyes,
And my tranced soul away would soar—
Would cleave, with arrowy speed, yon boundless blue,
Through thy fair regions, void of fear,
And trace the footsteps of the Deity,
With mingled awe and joy, from sphere to sphere.

Blest poesy ! who fir'dst the seers of old,
To thee the mission has been given
To light unquenchable desires in man
For bliss, then lead him on to heaven.
Ten thousand welcomes to our sin-stained shore,
With thankful hearts we render thee ;
'Tis thine to lift the veil that hides from view,
The glorious scenes of immortality.

TO TRUTH.

“Hail! sacred Truth, that with soul-wooing charms
Doth sometimes glad our weeping, wayward race,
And teach us how to walk life’s paths aright.”

FISHER.

HAIL! glorious Truth,
Thou beauteous offspring of the Deity;
Thou swift-wing’d spirit of sweet liberty;
The swelling torrent of my heart I pour
In praise to thee; for every passing hour
Reveals new beauties of thy heavenly form
To my pleased sight. Through every blasting storm
Of earth my trusting spirit, led by thee,
Still passes scathless, happy, bounding—free.

The brightness of thy heaven-reflecting eye
My spirit fills with hopes that ne'er can die ;
Thou pure bright essence of the great UNKNOWN,
For ever hovering near His glorious throne,
Like a vast sun whose full resplendent beams,
Through Heaven's immortal bowers, in gladd'ning
streams,

Unceasing shoot their everlasting light,
To bless those souls whose "faith is turned to sight."

Thee, thee, I laud ! would I could snatch thy lyre,
Would that a moment I could catch thy fire,
Would that the first Archangel's voice were mine,
Then would I sing thy praise in strains divine.

Oh ! let a son of earth, ye angel choirs,
Unite with yours the lay that Truth inspires ;
Fired by that Power to whom all power belongs,
Loud would he blend his voice with your sweet
songs.

Like the Eternal God, O blessèd Truth !
Celestial beauty, and immortal youth,
In dazzling radiance circle round thy brow,
In bloom as fresh—as brightly glowing now,
As when at His right hand at first thou stood,
And viewing His creation, call'dst it "good "

But not confined to heaven thy winged way,
Swift as the bright heart-cheering morning-ray,
Thou to our world of sin and woe hast sped,
And raised to life earth's sons, else lost or dead !
In darkness deep, without thy chasing spell,
Would all have groped their desperate road to hell.
Yes, he, the Prince of Darkness, would have still
(His mission here to work our lasting ill)
Reaped for his garnér, with exulting gripe,
A larger crop for harvest still more ripe.
But, oh ! not so decreed our glorious God,
Or thy blest footsteps ne'er our earth had trod ;
A minst'ring spirit blandly thou hast come,
And unto man revealed a brighter home.
In every flower that meets our kindling eye,
We see the emblems of thy purity ;
In yonder bow that spans the threatening cloud—
Thy glowing faithfulness ; and visions crowd
Within our rapt imagination's grasp,
That fondly to our loving hearts we clasp.
In every fleecy cloudlet, gently driven
Athwart yon vast cerulean vault of heaven ;
In every twinkling, hope-inspiring star,
That gems old Night's dark, ever-rolling car ;

In every roseate beam of wak'ning morn ;
In every sound that to our ear then borne,
Comes softly o'er us in sweet harmony,
And wafts the soul into eternity ;
In every witching trait of beauteous Eve,
When she reposes calmly—we receive
A quick'ning impulse on our heaven-ward way,
And pant to soar to everlasting day.

SOLITARY MUSINGS.

"These are the haunts of Meditation, these
The scenes where ancient bards the inspiring breath
Extatic, felt; and, from the world retired,
Conversed with angels, and immortal forms,
On gracious errands bent;

* * * * *

To hint pure thoughts, and warn the favour'd soul
For future trials fated to prepare;
To prompt the poet, who devoted gives
His muse to better themes."

THOMPSON.

'Tis in the silence of the solitude,
Where none of life's distracting cares intrude,
Nor aught to break the musing soul's repose;
Far from the world—its censure or applause,

When over all the glowing scene is spread
The curtain fair of heaven ; and when is fed
Each wondering sense, with every sight and sound,
Till the charmed spirit, with a blissful bound,
Shakes off the chains of earth, and like a dove,
Soars on swift pinions to the realms above ;
'Tis then vile passions from the breast are driven,
And the tranced soul sweet commune holds with
heaven.

Who at the skirt of some wild moor hath been,
When setting sun hath poured its golden sheen
Upon the sea of purple heather blooms
That round him stretched, while delicate perfumes
Have gratefully disported round his brow,
And at his feet with calm and constant flow,
The lonely moorland stream has wound along
Its silver thread, and humm'd its simple song,
But there has felt himself shut in with God,
And far away from life's rough crowded road
Has wished to spend his days. Not with the gloom
Of the dark misanthrope who scorns the tie
Of human brotherhood, with a proud eye,
And icy heart, in which there is no room

To lodge one generous impulse for the weal
Of those around. No, such can never feel
The bliss of being alone—but from a strong
Upheaving of the longing soul to know
The mysteries of being—what the breath
Of life, and what the change that waits on Death ;—
To soar the bright, inviting stars among,
And at the throne of heaven itself to bow ;
A pure outgoing of his better part
In search of God ; an impulse from on high,
To see the glory of His passing by ;
A calm presenting of his naked heart
Before th' Almighty Spirit, with the prayer,
That TRUTH in characters of flame might there
Be with His finger writ. Oh ! blessed Truth,
With all the vigour of impassioned youth,
In crowded haunts, in glen, and flowery lea,
In the mysterious language of the sea,
In twilight, in the solitary tree,
In morn's first flush, and when the mid-day beam
Gilds sleeping woods, by lonely moon-lit stream,
And in the starry heavens, he seeks for thee.

O, how sublime ! to stand on lonely tower,

At night's mid-watch, and at that solemn hour,
When earth is wrapp'd in darkness and in sleep,
To scan with raptured soul heaven's azure deep,
And then, with faith in God, from earth to spring
Among the shining spheres, on restless wing,
Yearning, with all the seraphim's desire,
To know the works of the Eternal Sire;—
Or stand, a solitary sentinel,
On mouldering ruin, listening to the fall
Of rain-drops dashing down the frowning wall,
Into the gloomy, sluggish stream beneath,
Low moaning round the sepulchres of death.
Or listen to the night-wind as it blows
In mystic whispers through the forest boughs,
And watch the shadows of the moonbeams pass
In silvery wavelets o'er the church-yard grass:—
What lofty feelings then the heart dilate !
What brooding 'neath the tombstone's dark yewshade !
What strong desires to know our future fate !
What pondering o'er the words that have been said,
By those we loved, in memory-treasured tones,
But o'er whose graves we hear the willow's moans !
Oh, then, how is the searching spirit thrown
Into the arms of the Almighty One ;

What firm impassioned prayer that he would lead
Into the paths of knowledge, and that, freed
From flesh and sense, its powers might gently blend
With spiritual existence, and ascend
With angel step, the sparkling heights of heaven,
To view the glories of its future home,
And drink its fill of Truth! And none have striven
To read the language of yon living dome,
Or trace the handiwork of God in vain ;
For as the eye from star to star, the plain,
With all its living hosts arrayed, hath scann'd,
Piercing the mazes of infinity,
How would the proud exulting soul expand,
Commensurate with the scene's sublimity,
And in its conscious greatness raise to Him,
Creation's Lord! its willing, grateful hymn
Of adoration. Never loving child
Walked in the foot-prints of creation's God,
Wishful to find the spirit's safe abode,
Without success. Be it upon the wild
And arid tracts of Afric's desert—where
The bold, intrepid Parke gave up his hope
Of mortal life, no longer strength to cope
With dangers of his trackless path—e'en there

The microscopic forest reared its head,
Near the adventurous trav'ller's dying bed ;
That tiny moss was as a golden link
To chain his drooping heart to life. He saw ;
His weakened faculties were led *to think* ;
The fatal dart Death was about to throw
Fell short the mark ; he drank the draught heaven
sent,
His hope revived, and in its strength he went,
Until he gained his goal.

A thousand doors
Ope to the mansions of the ransomed just,
Which Faith unlocks, and, with confiding trust,
Treads, with the glorified, Heaven's golden floors.
None ever walked in Nature's realms intent,
With centred thought, more of her mysteries
To learn, but found where'er his footsteps went,
Beneath the canopy of smiling skies,
In her imperial grounds—a rich reward—
Rose in true worth on earth, and Heaven's regard.

NATURE.

“O, Nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections, at whose word they rose,
Next to that power who formed thee and sustains,
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.”

COWPER.

“THE pure in heart are bless'd; and shall see God.”
Thus spoke incarnate Truth; and he who robes
Himself in purity, where'er he walks,
Within creation's ample round, doth find
The smile and presence of the living God.
As Adam—with the regal dignity
Of soul unstained by sin, in the retreat

Of Eden's beauteous shades—walked forth and held
Communion with the Sovereign of the Skies,
So man can enter Nature's gorgeous fane,
And, walking 'mid its endless beauties, hold
Sweet converse with creation's God. For though
Through sin the glorious privilege was lost,
Of walking there with Heaven's high Majesty,
And listening to His words on themes divine ;—
Though man was driven thence, and swords of flame
Guarded the closèd gates, yet ONE e'en there
Arose who, in the greatness of his might,
Before the world's rapt gaze, asunder burst
The bars of brass—crushed sin beneath his foot,
And in his world-wide love bids welcome now
All those whose hearts to purity aspire.
Oh ! what a place of safety and of strength
Is that fair “paradise regained !” The soul
Rises to its primeval dignity,
When it doth tread those sacred grounds, and gives,
Fill'd with the fulness of the life divine,
The homage of its being to its God.
Thus will it pour the burden of its song :—
“Eternal God, I bless thee for my life ;
That out of nothing thine all-powerful hand

Did raise me into being, and endow
Me with those powers which, when this world
Hath fled before the awful majesty,
And glory of Thy second coming, back
Into the fathomless, chaotic gulf,
To take again the impress of Thy will—
Shall still be mine, expanding evermore
Into the fulness of Thyself. Great God !
I lay my being at Thy feet, and own,
With gratitude unspeakable, Thy claim
On each volition of my will—each thought
That passes through the chambers of my soul,
And every act that marks my changeful life—
I own, and glory in, the act—my full
Dependence on Thyself for all I am,
And have, or may, or ever can possess.

“Upheld by Thee I walk a living soul,
Erect and fearless through this world of sin,
And tread upon the serpent’s head, which trails,
With hellish craft and hate, his hideous form,
Beneath the precious flowers my hand hath reared,
Within the garden of my soul. I pluck,
With triumph, from his red, distended jaws,

Th' envenomed sting, and send him powerless,
And writhing, to the dark and slimy depths
Of his deep misery. Upheld by Thee,
I smile in conscious, calm security,
While the loud thunder roars from hill to hill,
Each rocking like a reed in Winter's blast,
And trembling to their base, at the dread sound
Of Thy Almighty voice, which rolls across
The sea of space to its remotest verge ;
Or when the lightning of Thy fearful wrath
Bursts through the lurid, massive, cloud-built heavens,
Shattering all to flaming wreck, I climb
The cloven cloud-rocks, on the whirlwind borne,
And view, with soul serene, the troubled Earth,
Affrighted at the progress of the storm ;
And—as the firebrands leap from cloud to cloud,
With dazzling brightness, lighting up the frown,
Throned, charged with seven thunders on Thy brow,—
Fleeing the vengeance of Thy dreadful hand."

Oh ! the vast strength of every one whose heart
Is one with Heaven. Like the lone granite rock,
That rears its hoary head amid the wide
And dreary wilderness of raging waves,

And breasts and braves the ocean's fiercest storms,
So he who puts his trust in Heaven stands firm,
Amid life's direst scenes, with giant strength,
And turns by prayer all to his highest good.

Thus stands he in the sylvan solitude,
Inspired by Nature's grand simplicity,
And feasts on angels' food. Oh! beautiful
The earth appears, robed in its flowery dress,
At this calm morning hour! The golden corn
Doth rustle in the breeze and sweetly sing
Of Him who planted it to satisfy
Man's e'er returning wants. Woods, fields, and
streams,
The silent glen, and winding vale, that leads
The eye away to the far distant hills!
The graceful trees of variegated tints,
And richly carved leaves; the spiral grass,
Each blade topp'd with a drop of crystal dew,
That burns and blazes in the rising sun,
Combining hues more rich and brilliant
Than costly diamond ever blazed abroad;
The soothing hush of Nature, as she lies
In the embrace of deep repose, only

LIFE.

"This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule."

YOUNG.

How doth the wakening mind exult with joy
Unspeakable, when from the gloomy depths
Of cloudy ignorance, with pride, it steps
Into the light of life ! How then each toy
Of childhood, which beguiled its grov'ling thought,
Is banished from the place it occupied
In the affections ! Wisdom then doth guide
Its steps, and, by advancing years, 'tis taught
Its destiny. Those motions then are stirred,

Whose influence doth attract the growing soul
With kindly power; and voices then are heard,
From every field, copse, brook, and mountain rill,
From clustering stars, that shed round every hill
Their streaming lustre, and from squandered hours
Of thoughtless folly, spent in the gay bowers
Of worldly bliss—that warn of Error's way,
And call mankind into the light of day.
From Nature's inmost depths these voices blend,
In telling us of being's holy end ;—
Alike both prompt and answer questions rife
With weightiest interests of human life.
Life, life! Oh! who can solve its mystery?
Ye great of earth! who on the proudest heights
Of Revelation stand, whose daring flights
Into the regions of eternity
Have led you farthest o'er the shoreless sea,
Say, what is life? Or, like the restless dove,
Which, wheeling its lone rounds o'er the vast deep—
That horrid pall, which hid, in endless sleep,
A teeming world—and, looking round, above,
Below, in vain, for resting place, was glad,
To gain the ark, have ye—bewildered, sad,
Through impotence of human skill, to find

Out God, or understand th' eternal mind ;
And startled at your loneliness sublime,
While hovering o'er the fathomless abyss
Of his deep things—your pinions closed,
And sought that ark of truth where have repos'd,
And must, earth's heaven-born sons, in every age,
Till life's huge sweep of waters do assuage,
And earth become a second heaven ; content
To know how little can be known—though bent
To know—of Him who sits on viewless throne,
The great, the unapproachable, UNKNOWN,
Whose essence none can entertain ? But life !
My soul, seest thou the confines of the past,
Or future ? Where art thou ? Though now bound
fast
To part of the vile dust thou tread'st, the strife
For purer regions—more extended sights—
Hath never ceased, and never will ! Delights
To come are based on pleasures past. Though bound
Thus to this earth, yet through the realms profound
Of God's vast universe, what can our flights
Prevent ? The powers of hell cannot ; and heaven
These bright and glorious hopes would ne'er have
given.

To crush them in their birth ;—nor lit desires,
Each one of which with aspirations fires
The soul—its glow increasing, each degree
It nears its source in deep intensity.

Life is a constant daring of the soul
(With hope's bright eye fixed on the distant goal)
In its ascent up the high hill of Fame,
There to unfurl the flag of one's own name,
Fluttering in the breath of human praise,
Crowning a long career of virtuous days.

But fame worth having, such as shall increase
In brilliance when that of stars shall cease
To light this world upon its path sublime !

Its mission to fulfil—as angels will
Perpetuate when human tongues are still
In death, and closed are all the scenes of Time.

Life is the great recurring thought of God,—
His attributes, His wond'rous works and ways ;
Of man, his source, his course and destiny ;
Of that which has been, is, and is to be.

Man is but what he thinks, and all his days
Are measured by his thoughts. He may have trod
Each quarter of the globe in search of pleasure ;
He may have breathed his century of years,

And spent a lifetime in amassing treasure,
And yet may ne'er have truly *lived* one hour.
Life is a constant growth in moral power—
Approximation to the Deity,
In love, in meekness, and in purity.
An active use of all the powers given
For good, whose full fruition will be heaven.

A SUNSET SCENE.

“Low walks the sun, and broadens by degrees,
Just o'er the verge of day. The shifting clouds,
Assembled gay, in richly gorgeous train,
In all their pomp attend his setting throne.

THOMPSON.

How cheering is the morn's first golden ray
To him who through the solitary night
Hath watched the tardy moments take their flight
Into the land of endless shades!—a prey
To thoughts more dark than is the thickest veil
That heaven e'er draws around the silent earth.
Oh! how the soul rejoices at the birth

Of the fresh beam that bursts into the vale,
And lightens up within the watcher's heart
Still fresher hopes that all may yet be well ;
That, as the sun from every woodland dell
Drinks up the mist, and as the clouds depart
At his approach, whose brightness fills the sky,
So may the mists of human ills, that close
Around his path, disperse ;—the cloud of woes
That hides from view his hopeful star, may fly
Before more prosperous gales, and life have still
For him some bliss reserved.

And at sunset,
When two congenial, loving hearts are met
To wander forth, at prompting of their will,
Along the silent, flowery vale, or o'er
Some moorland height, or by the lonely shore
Of the deep-sounding ocean—bound by ties
Of kindred thoughts, and hallowed sympathies,—
There to recount the chequered past, and blend
Their hopes for coming time, or lowly bend
In earnest worship at some rural shrine,
Seeking, amid life's struggles, strength divine
To aid them in the evil day. What scene

So beautiful, so calm, so truly grand,
So emblematic of the spirit-land,
As that which with the undulating green,
And flowery varieties of earth,
Blends the soft iris-tints of peaceful skies ?
If e'er we truly feel our being's worth,
And to the dignity of freemen rise ;
If e'er we spurn the blandishments of vice,
Though the enchanting syren doth entice
With softest words, and most voluptuous charms,
'Tis in a scene like this. The spirit warms
With conscious joy as it doth gaze around,
And fancies the reposing earth to be
An angel-home. It listens ! but no sound
Is heard that mars the reigning harmony.
It gazes on the quiet western sky,
And traces the converging lines of light
To the pavilion of the sun. The high
Arcade, with molten gold, intensely bright,
Is roofed, and with transparent sapphires paved,
It seems to be the gorgeous vestibule of heaven,
And in its rosy light, those who have braved
Earth's storms walk onward to the mansions given
To faithful pilgrims : backward do they gaze,

A moment, on the way they've come, then raise
Their loud triumphant, tearless song of praise,
And with the rapture of a welcome guest,
Press forward to their everlasting rest.
And haste towards the gates which lead to founts
Of living streams that lave the verdant mounts
Of heaven, where stand the spirits of the just
Emancipate ; who—sprung from human dust,
And risen to their native clime—can view,
'Neath curtains of a brighter, richer hue
Than e'er were spread o'er earth, such scenes of bliss
As the lone bard of Patmos never saw ;—
As none but the Eternal hand could draw ;
Where all the elements of happiness
For all capacities exist. The star
Which circles round the Throne of Light,
Whose rich effulgence feeds, and makes more bright
Its lustrous rays ; for (not as here below)
The nearer heaven's great Sun, the deeper is its glow ;
And the dim luminary that, afar,
Within the distant depths of heaven, shoots forth
His lesser ray, alike receive their birth,
Their worth, their all from Heaven's exhaustless store ;
And each, with bliss replete, desires no more,

Or, if desires are felt, such only rise
As feed the bliss enjoyed—the life that never dies.

Far stretching, as can reach immortal eye,
Heaven's amaranthine bowers of beauty lie;
And, interspersing all the verdant plains,
Where Love, in its perfection, ever reigns,
The trees of LIFE their laden branches spread,
From whose rich fruitage the redeemed are fed;
And unproscribed their food, of every fruit
Each one may eat as best his taste may suit:
Unlike the earthly Eden—here no voice
Of warning wisdom checks each new-born choice
Of its inhabitants. Earth's trials o'er,
Heaven's crowning joy is, "*They go out no more.*"

Forth from the sacred Sanctuary flow
Life's crystal streams, meandering between
Their bowery banks of fresh, unchanging green,
Onward they murmur 'neath the golden glow
Of bright, unfading skies, and soothe to rest—
Unbroken rest! and holy musings, those
Who through earth's tribulations—hellish foes
Have fought, and gained the regions of the blest.

Oh ! how that sabbath air, with fragrance fraught,
Whose soothing influence, e'er inducing thought,
Plays round the spirit, bearing fitful strains
Of harmony across the heavenly plains
From lowliest harps and highest Powers and Thrones,
In ever-changing and delicious tones ;
By distance mellowed now they thrill the soul ;
Now through the open flood-gates onward roll
The harmonies through every vale of heaven,
Increasing as they roll, with tribute given
By gentlest rill ; all join ! until the blest abode
At once is vocal with the praises of its God.—
Thus to a thoughtful mind, a sunset scene
Glories unfolds by grov'ling worldlings never seen.

HEAVEN'S DESIGN AND MAN'S CHOICE.

"Hard lot of man—to toil for the reward
Of virtue, yet lose it! Wherefore hard!

* * * *

Grace leads the right way; if you choose the wrong,
Take it and perish; but restrain your tongue;
Charge not, with light sufficient, and left free,
Your wilful suicide on God's decree."

COWPER.

To ope heaven's pearly gates for rebel man,
Was sovran Wisdom's sole, unaided plan,
And power omnipotent to execute.
But though frail man is impotent to gain
An entrance there, yet still doth Wisdom deign
To mark approvingly his earnest suit

For immortality of bliss. How few,
Alas ! how few appreciate the boon
She offers. Walking 'neath a hazy moon—
Their own creation—bringing nought to view
But shapes, and images, and low desires,
The reflex of their own besotted mind,
The mass of mortals flee the sun which fires
To noble thoughts ;—the path where they might find
Heaven's scattered manna, (the rich food of gods !)
And which would lead to angels' bright abodes.
Sole guided by their feeble lunar ray,
Each one, contented, walks his devious way,
Nor cares to step into the light of day.
And not the grossly ignorant alone
Construct and walk paths wayward of their own,
But those who traverse learning's starry heights,
With souls susceptible of all delights
That earth affords ; these, in their spirit's pride,
Will lift their heads and scoffingly deride
The truth round which all other truths revolve,
In which the truly great have put their trust
In every age—a God wrapp'd in the dust
Of His creating—folded in a tomb !
So low He bowed, that mortal's hopes might bloom

With immortality ; discrediting—
'Cause in their fancied greatness they can't solve
The mystery—the evidence He brought
Of His divinity—plain to the eyes
Of babes, but hidden from the proud and wise.
Or, if they do not thus reject the ground
Of man's acceptance at the gates of heaven,
How coldly they regard those who have striven
To imitate a Saviour's life, and crowned,
Oh ! bliss supreme ! their efforts with success ;—
The "*righteous over much !*" who, to excess,
Have drunk at the pure fountain-head of bliss ;—
The *abject* suppliants at the feet of Him
To whom archangels raise their lowly hymn
Of praise ;—they who have bravely met the waves
Of life's tempestuous sea, in strength divine,
Whose kindly acts in loveliness enshrine
Their characters, and from whose honoured graves
A voice outspeaks, in language loud and clear :
“ Ye vain, self-wise, and proud, know that the fear
Of God is the first lesson learnt by all
Whose knowledge does them good ; and that to fall
In meek simplicity before his throne,
Is the sole way to make true bliss our own.

Ye pygmies, puff'd with self-important airs,
To creatures arrogating what was never theirs,
Raised on the mole-hill of your vast conceit,
You stretch across your Lilliputian realm
Of knowledge—scorning all the truly great
Of earth—your puny arms, and think to helm
Your vessel safely through the misty deep
Of future life. Dauntless ye onward sweep
O'er the now calm, and the now howling main,
To gain some fairy island of your brain,
Ye know not where. Nor knowing that your bark
Is compassless and rudderless, ye drift
Along the wilderness of waters dark,
And plunge into the gulf of deep despair.
Then follows shipwreck ; and upon the gale,
Mid warring elements, is borne the wail
Of hopeless misery. Alas ! too late
Ye cry for help ; ye sought and urged the fate
A God beneficent did ne'er intend ;
Whose mercy did with justice ever blend
Her voice for you ; but ye would no control,
And, in the spring-tide of your glowing soul,
Threw off allegiance to the Truth, and rose
Superior to the trammels of her laws.

Ye snapt the silken cords of trusting faith,
That bound ye to the pure and good, and bowed,
In base idolatry, your minds,—too proud
To take the gospel yoke—with every breath
Of doctrine tossed, ye bowed, like slaves, before
Mere creatures of imagination ;—bore
Away into the trackless regions drear
Of self-sufficiency, and madly there
Yourselves destroyed."

AN INVOCATION.

"Man must soar.
An obstinate activity within,
An insuppressive spring, will toss him up,
In spite of fortunes's load.
* * * *
And why? Because immortal as his Lord;
And soul immortal must for ever heave
At something great; the glitter, or the gold!
The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven!"

YOUNG.

BUT is not man to soar?
Is he not Nature's secrets to explore?
Content is he in ignorance to lie,
And to her thousand beauties shut his eye;—
To live a useless life and then to die;—
Into oblivion sink, and leave no trace

Of active being, which will mark the place
He occupied in this world's history ?
No, no ! though he is mortal, he hath powers
That are immortal ! great and priceless dowers !
Capacities that ever will expand—
Beneath the culture of the Giver's hand—
And raise him to primeval dignity,
In glory growing through eternity.

Rise, mortals, rise ! your privilege assert ;
Your birthright claim ; no longer lie inert,
Content with husks ; heirs of eternal life,
Leave the low elements, with poison rife,
That dwarf the soul, and rise to purer air.
A gracious Father waits to lead you where
You may find rest,—a rest of ceaseless toil.
Blest toil ! for ever labouring in a soil
That yields a competence which fully meets
All possible necessities ;—those sweets
The most embittered life can meet below,
And more than any creature good can e'er bestow.

Rise, mortals, rise ! yet venture not alone
Into the wide, interminable field

Of intellect ; but to His guidance yield
A child-like will, who can your labours crown
With lasting gain, or leave you far to stray
O'er Error's hills your dark and devious way
To perish in your pride.

Rise, mortals, rise !
With strong desire, rise through yon yielding skies,—
Through the bright ranks that guard, with sword of
flame,
The great Eternal's throne ;—still upward mount,
And for your passport shout a Saviour's name ;
Nor cease to rise, till at creation's fount,
Which gushes thence, ye drink your fill of bliss.
This is *true life*, nor be content with less ;
For know that ye the loftiest heights may climb
Into the regions of Philosophy,
And cull the fairest flowers of Poesy,—
Fame's brightest halo circle throughout Time
Your name, emblazoning each generous deed
Of life,—admiring nations give their meed
Of willing praise, a tribute to the mind
That glows with love for creatures of its kind,
And compasses both earth, and air, and sea,

Threading the mazes of infinity,
And yet ye may be strangers to your God,—
May choose the lesser for the greater good.
Yes! ye may drink your draughts of bliss from streams
Whose source and course will cease to be with Time;
And ye may satisfy yourselves with dreams
Of greatness, treading in the paths sublime
Of science and of art, which, at the blast
Of the archangel's trumpet, will be hurled
To dust, and ye the witnesses—aghast—
Of their destruction with a burning world.

Rise, mortals! but diminish not, nor add
One jot unto the glorious gospel plan
Which angels, ever emulative, scan,
And Wisdom infinite drew out; but glad
To learn its mysteries—eager to scale
Its lofty heights, and grasp the mighty whole,
To its blest Author lend an humble soul,
And hearken from His lips the simple tale
Of His redeeming love. Apart from Him,
True greatness there is not. The cherubim
And seraphim, who on his pleasure wait,
In all the pomp of hierachal state,

Are equally dependent, as the worm
That creeps the earth, what time the summer storm
Hath washed the green-grown rural lane, for all
That they possess, on Him, and lowly fall
In reverential love and gratitude,
Acknowledging the Giver of all good.
And shall proud man explore the treasury
Of His perfections, with the very powers
Which He hath given ;—in contemplative hours,
Draw from the depths of dim eternity
Those thoughts that thrill with their sublimity—
Those tones that fill with heavenly ecstacy
The human soul, and yet prefer to range
His mountain fancies—keep at distance still
Him who, with one volition of His will,
Could give his being to oblivion's shade
On the four winds. Anomaly most strange !
Oh ! what is learning—what the vain parade
Of Wisdom, but a vague, unmeaning name,
If they lead not, in profound humility,
The soul unto its God ; kindling a flame
Of deep adoring love ; desires to be
For ever His, and in His image grow
Each moment of its being ; bent to gain

Perfection's fair proportions, with a glow
Akin to warm seraphic zeal ;—a love
Which floods can never quench, nor waters drown,
Expansive as the far-extending main,
As boundless as the mantling dome above,
Embracing—from the first archangel, down
To meanest worm—all beings God hath made.
True knowledge is a pearl of untold price,—
Flowers of excellence that never fade,
Upspringing in the garden of the mind—
That inner world—that blooming paradise
In which the spirit walks, and oft doth find
Those blessed seasons of sweet intercourse
With self, and with the great eternal Source
Of Knowledge and of Wisdom, which afford
So rich an antepast of joys to come,—
The unveiled splendours of its future home,
And sweet communion with its gracious Lord.

When Revelation's mellow light doth flood
The landscape of the mind, and when is gained
Some overlooking height of Purity,
The spirit, wrapt in the serenity
Of the fair scene around, hath there attained,

In calm, collected thought, the highest good
That it can ever realize below.

"Tis Heaven—in its degree—sending a glow
Of its pure raptures through the heart—a scent
Of its bright blooms, with sweetest fragrance redolent.

"Tis Wisdom from above that *only* can
Rightly direct the feet of erring man.
He may have knowledge, *but* that is a power
For good or evil, and may bless each hour
Of life, and make it one harmonious whole ;
Or, making more susceptible the soul
To pain or pleasure, it may prove the bane
To all enjoyment, from the conscious feeling
Of disparity between the heart's desire,
And the convictions of the judgment, stealing,
Unbidden, where unruly passions reign.

The greatest man the world hath ever seen
Is he, who learning's giddy heights doth tread,
And grasps with ease all knowledge, yet the higher
He climbs, with deeper reverence his head
Bows to his great Creator : such hath been
The most approved of man and God. The place

Most enviable, in all creation's round,
Is at the Saviour's footstool to be found—
The blest recipient of his smiles and grace.
All short of this—though Fame's loud trumpet-blast
Might echo forth man's praise while Time shall last—
Is raising structures without counting cost—
Is dreaming, and when wak'ning, finding all is lost.

A RETROSPECT.

"Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driven out the ungodly from his sight
And th' habitations of the just; to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained
Good out of evil to create, instead,
Of spirits malign, a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
His good to worlds and ages infinite."

MILTON.

NEAR to yon mystic cloud, pavilions
The everlasting God, Heaven's mighty ones
Attend to hear the counsels of their King;
And that imperial cabinet He owns
To be the choice of heaven, for these are they

Who—when the proud usurper of its throne,
In hate and envy, would have made his way
To that high seat, and cast in triumph down
Its glorious occupant—drove the foul foe,
With all his legions of revolt, to hell—
The region of unfathomable woe.
The flower of God's creation ! how ye fell ;
And, oh ! from what a glorious altitude,
From highest seats of excellence, to brood
Upon your fall, and feed upon despair.
The veriest wretch, down to your regions drear,
Ye drag in hate from earth, is now your peer,
And in his torments hath the lesser share.
Satan ! with all thy pride's inflating swell ;
Thy hollow pomp and pageantry of hell ;
Thy knowledge and seducing subtilty ;
Thy hate and pain-inflicting cruelty,—
Thy damning power is limited. No child
Of earth need fear to be by thee beguiled,
Who stands in heaven's high grace; for He who drove
Thee from thy throne, can still His prowess prove.

How are the mighty fallen ! they who erst,
Next to the great I AM, were counted first

In being's rank. The morning stars ! how dim
Their glory has become. The lofty hymn
Which at creation's birth was by them sung,
Is turned to curses, and their harps—unstrung,
Piled up in heaps,—swept by the sulphurous gale,
Which through the wastes, and darkness-raftered halls
Of hell drive fiercely,—send forth such a wail
Of desolation as the heart appals
Of the arch-fiend himself. Yes, he most proud,
In dark, unbending hate, is lowest bowed !
Pride, like a mill-stone, dragg'd thee to that doom,
Whose blackness will thy every hope entomb,
While 'tis the pleasure of thy Conqueror's will
To set His captive free. Meantime He still
Doth hold the reins of universal sway,
As if thou ne'er hadst been ! nor doth one ray
The less beam from the glory of that crown,
A willing universe accords His own.
What contrast in creation's round so great,
As that between thy former and thy present state !
From contemplating thy drear residence,
The eye rests pleased on that bright eminence
Thou once didst occupy ;—views with delight
The blest enjoyment of thine old compeers,

Who, swerving not from duty, know no fears
Of changing state, but move in phalanx bright,
Performing still in love the high behests
Of Him with whom, they feel, for ever rests
Their lease of being, and of growing bliss.
Nor is, thanks, great Supreme ! the happiness
Of those whom Thou redeemest from our earth,
One tittle less because their being's birth
Dates later in the annals of Thy mind.
Bent on Thy creatures' good, and ever kind
To all, Thou giv'st to all alike their fill.
Witness the advent of His only Son
On earth, ye wond'ring worlds, who, to fulfil
His father's will and to regain a world, which, run
Its path centrifugal, was plunged in woe,
Producing discord through the spheres, came down
Through his dominions, and with a rich glow
Of unextinguishable love, the crown
And regal splendours of a God laid by,
To save a rebel of the deepest dye.

This is the mystery of mysteries ;
For this more brightly shine yon ambient skies ;
For this old ocean's rolling floods upraise

Their mighty voice in everlasting praise ;
'Tis this day uttereth to day, and night
Shews forth to night in still increasing light ;
For this the seasons in their beauty roll,
And spread the tidings round from pole to pole ;—
Throughout the astonished earth hath gone the word !
Nor place remaineth where the voices are not heard.
This fired the soul of each prophetic bard
Of old, and was the burden of his song.
On Lebanon's proud heights, with eye sky-ward,
Or in Judea's stately groves among,
They swept the lofty harps which God had given,
And told to earth the kind designs of heaven.
The weal of unborn generations hung
On their inspired and truth-revealing tongue.
They, looking down the winding vale of Time,
From its high headlands, saw each future scene
Enacted, as already it had been ;
And heard its army's ceaseless tramp sublime !
As on it marched to take the field 'gainst Death.
How fruitlessly ! for, in his withering breath,
How silently each fresh arrival fell !
No sanguinary struggle there to tell,
With streams of gore, the havoc that he made ;

They fell ;—within the limits of his shade,
Their crumbling bones lay scattered, till the wind
To the four heavens gave their dust, to find,
In polar regions—Lapland's dreary shades—
By its lone shores, where endless twilight braids
Its gloomy stole ; or, India's burning plains ;
Or, in the coral caves, where Ocean reigns
With undisputed sway—a resting place,
Till, by the trumpet's blast, and the deep bass
Of crashing worlds, each particle leaps forth,
Instinct with life, from east, west, south and north.

Far backwards turned th' enraptured Seers their
gaze,
Beyond earth's earliest infancy of days,
And saw the troubled breast of Chaos heave
With wild commotion, as if on the eve
Of mighty change ; when lo ! before them rose
From out the void, the far-extending sweep
Of varied elements, while o'er the deep,
The spirit brooded in his calm repose—
In grandeur rose the earth, raised by the hand
Of Him, who, wrapt in His eternity—
The self-created Was, and Is To Be,

Did speak, and it was done—who gave command,
And it stood fast. In pristine beauty stood
Man's smiling home, and God pronounced it good.
Sun, moon and stars, earth, air and rolling sea,
Took up their places in immensity,
And joined their voices with those mighty ones—
Those ministers of his—heaven's first-born sons !
In lofty peans to the viewless throne,
Where sits the Lord omnipotent alone,
And silent meditates, well pleased to hear
The choral anthem of his new-born sphere.

MAN.

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful is man !
* * * * *
An heir of glory ! a frail child of dust !
Helpless immortal ! insect infinite !
A worm ! a god !—I tremble at myself,
And in myself am lost."

YOUNG.

TOWARDS his goal, Time rolls unnumbered years,
When *man*, the monarch of the earth, appears
The hero of the Epic, whose grand strains
Should startle hell, and echo o'er heaven's plains ;—
Mysterious being ! the connecting link
'Tween spirits pure and brutes that never *think* ;

The slave of passion, yet in spirit free ;
A clod of earth, yet lives eternally ;
A heart that beats in unison with God,
Yet often braves his thunder and his rod ;
A mind illumined with meridian light.
Anon enveloped in the blackest night ;
Now humbly asking Heaven its child to own ;
Then proudly hurling Godhead from His throne ;
His breast the place where heavenly raptures dwell,
Oft followed by the deep despair of hell.
(Immortal Shakspere ! well did'st thou unfold
The human heart.—Oh ! well the tale was told,
By thine unerring tongue, of all the fears
And hopes which mark man's chequered three-score
years,
And still the book, whence thou didst sing thy song—
The wond'rous song, which through the nations rung,
Whose touching strains thrill every listener's breast
With thoughts and feelings ne'er before expressed—
Is inexhausted of those melodies,
Which, deep as thought, and lofty as the skies,
Wake universal sympathy for man.)
And is this he whose birth the mighty plan
Of the creation crowned ?—who came a soul

Pure as the crystal floods of life that roll,
Like sea of glass, around the throne of Deity
Fresh from his Maker's hand ? Oh ! is this he
Who, girded with immortal strength, did stand
In Eden's midst, the sovereign ?—whose command
Was earth's sole rule ?—who was companion meet
For God, within that garden's still retreat ;
So full of Truth, so holy, pure and good,
That heaven he felt within, where'er he stood
Or walked in that blest place ? How great thy fall !
Methinks, when the sad news reached heaven, that all
The sons of light their work of love would cease,
To mourn the act which broke thine earthly peace ;—
The throne of God with pity veil its face,
For guilty man and for his suffering race ;
And Satan's dark and hateful soul recoil
With horror from the sad but sacred spoil
His hellish craft had seized. Alas ! what woe
Thy disobedience hath wrought below ;
And yet thy very fall is the sole key
That opens up man's earthly history.
Redemption is creation's aim and end.
Man fell from God that God might man befriend ;
That he might show those depths of love divine

Which those high beings, who in brightness shine
Clear as the eyes of flame the prophet saw,
Can never fathom ; and that he might draw
His creatures into closer bonds of love
Than he in Eden's bowers could ever prove.
Yet we the rising sigh can scarce repress,
When thinking of the short-lived happiness
Which earth's first sovereign and his beauteous queen
In Eden felt. See where those walls of green—
Towering in verdant beauty to the sky,
Enwreathed with golden fruitage which doth vie
In its rich colours with the gorgeous west—
Circle the region where, so richly blest
In love and innocence, the happy pair
(Each with the other pleased their bliss to share)
Did pass the golden hours of life's glad morn,
Ne'er dreaming they would ever have to mourn
The loss of present joys. The very air
Feels fresh from Heaven, and on its wings doth bear
A balm which, while it soothes the soul with dreams
Of inexpressible delights, doth nerve
It with immortal strength. High are the themes
Of blissful contemplation in those bowers ;
Yet equal to them are the mind's vast powers.

Given to the dwellers there ; and will these swerve
From their allegiance to their gracious Lord ?
Surrounded with whate'er can make their life
A thing to be desired—fair Paradise
Around them—Heaven within. Oh ! why not prize
Their blest estate ? Oh ! wherefore discord, strife—
The fruit of sin, e'er mar the growing bliss
Of their pure souls ? By what necessity—
Earth's groans, and man's dire sufferings, all ask this,
Though it may impious seem—should they, the free,
The pure, the new-made monarchs of the earth,
So soon fall from their bliss ? Why Sin and Death
So soon stalk through those bowers, and, with foul
breath,
Blast every flower, and trample, at the birth,
Each budding hope beneath their iron foot ?
Rack'd with perplexity, man will thus put
Such questions as can ne'er be solved by man ;
Yet though, bewildered, he doth often scan
The suffering state in which he finds mankind.
No power of earth or hell can ever bind
His hopes for man, which are the wings that raise
The soul into the world of thought sublime !
Where, undisturbed, the past or coming time

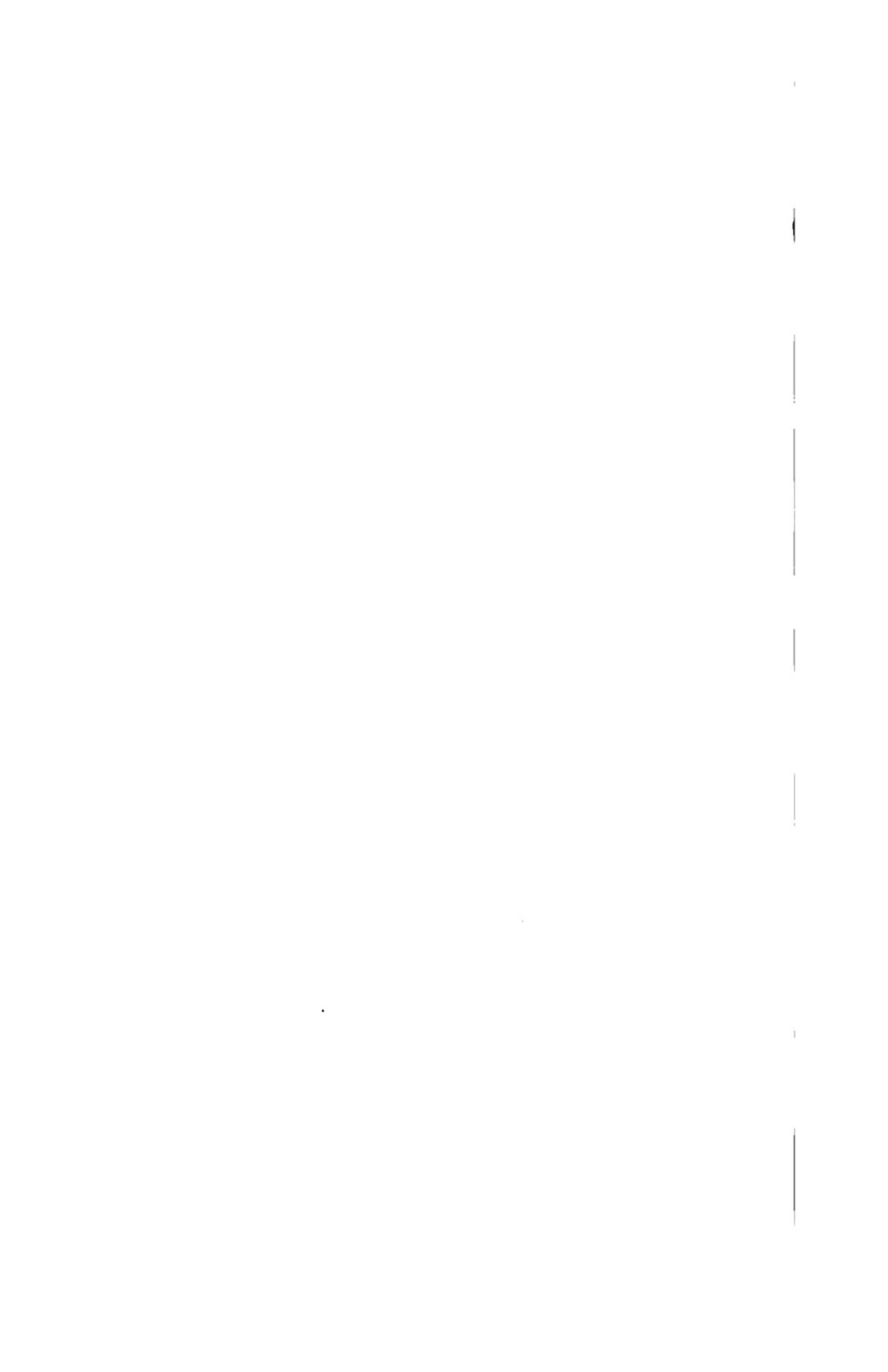
It contemplates, illumined by those rays
That from the empyrean stream
Upon the heart of man,—that guiding beam
'Mid darkness, doubt and fear, will lead along
A path of safety, beauty, and of song.

I lay me in the bosom of a wood,
Clothed in the beauty of its summer dress ;
In sooth a spot of passing loveliness
Was that green wood. I lay in musing mood,
Thinking of joys that blest my dear boyhood.
These bloomed fresh as the flowers that round me
grew,—
Lovely as when at first they sprung to view,
And seemed to whisper of some future good.
There as I lay surrounded with the light
Of that bright time, how did my full heart long
To blend its thoughts and music in a song,
Whose strains should bless the world. Oh ! for the
might
Of seraphs' voice : Oh ! for their golden lyre,
Cried I, that I mankind to noblest deeds might fire.
Thus lay I talking with my burning thought,
Striving for utterance to give it birth,

When came—chilly as night-winds from the North—
A voice from bower hard by. “Vain man, hope nougħt
Of those who err, then laugh at their own folly ;
Hope not to touch their heart, or change their way ;
Others have tried and *failed* before thy day.
Though for their good thou giv’st a life-time wholly,
Think not the amaranth shall grace thy brow ;
Far mightier than thou have won the wreath,
Which soon has withered in the world’s cold breath,
And men do grovel much as ever now ;
Yes, still they err, and laugh at their own folly,
Then throw away thy moping melancholy.”
Indignant at the harsh insulting voice
From one I felt did wish the world no good,
With passion circling in my heated blood,
I warmly answered, “ Yes, thou would’st rejoice,
Base Sophist, were but what thou say’st true ;
Seek not my hope for man away to lure,
While Nature blooms, and while yon stars endure
To joys more pure than those he ever knew
Man shall ascend.” While thus I made reply,
A brightness burst from out the evening sky ;
I felt the presence of some spirit good,
And heard another and a better voice,

“ Mortal, hold firm thy hope, blest is thy choice.”
When lo ! the heavenly visitant before me stood.
While the first voice had filled my soul with gloom ;
Made sad my heart at thought of the world’s woe,
And that its state should e’er continue so,
With none to save it from its hapless doom.
“ God’s agents are abroad,” the vision said,
In nervous tones, “ the world shall yet be better,
Man yet shall triumph—bursting every fetter,
And Heaven’s full glory on the earth be shed.”
Thus spake,—and the bright vision soared on high,—
In thrilling, hopeful words that better voice,
And a glad chorus, “ Man, in hope rejoice ! ”
Filled the sweet silence of that evening sky.
Oh, Poesy ! though madness often styled,
I love thee as the mother loves her darling child.

Miscellaneous Poems.



Miscellaneous Poems.



LINES WRITTEN ON READING TENNYSON'S POEMS.



O, GENTLE Tennyson! I breathe thy name
With tenderness: thee, though unseen, I love.
Thy wandering voice hath filled my native grove
With music, such as doth the mind inflame
With noblest aspirations. The moss-rose
And mountain daisy have a brighter eye,—

A chaster, fresher cheek ; a blither sky
Hath rising morn, the day a gentler close,
E'er since these mountains echoed with thy song.
Oft hast thou led me to that fairy shore,
Where thou hast culled those flowers that evermore
Will grace thy brow. And oft I've strayed among
Its moon-lit bowers, and, guided by thy hand,
The wonders heard and seen of that bright, dreamy
land.

The breaking of the ever-surging sea,
Against the craggy, solitary shore ;
The rush of wintry winds ; the hollow roar
Of mighty waters, struggling to be free,
Down in the gloomy depths of ocean's caves ;
The mermaid's shrill, wild song, that o'er the waves
Comes bounding with unearthly sound ; the scream
Of lonely bittern, as she wings her way
Across the dreary waste, or echoing bay,
To her far home—are sounds that in the dream
Of the lone midnight-muser, with a grand,
A thrilling power, come to the listening soul,
And waken thoughts unspeakable ! How dear
Are Locksley's dreams, when, through the dreamer's
ear,

They murmur inward,—like the restless roll
Of landward wave on some deserted strand—
The ever-busy world, the while, but heard
Like hum of passing bee. Then voices come
From the invisible ; and founts are stirred,
Whose waters flash beneath a golden dome.
Their Iris tints of promise and of hope,
These never stirred ; those never heard, along
The crowded thoroughfare of life, where grope
Their darksome way, in one commingled throng,
Those of the outer world.

Still onward roll,
Thou restless river ; roll thy troubled waves
On to the sea. I hear them reach their goal,
Resounding in the mighty ocean's caves.
I see ! I feel ! that Time will yet be tossed
Down the eternal gulf ! And, as a star,
Lone twinkling in the depths of summer sky,
Shoots forth its solitary ray afar,
At break of morn, and—as the sun on high
Climbs up the east—grows dim, and then is lost ;
So yonder glorious sun, and all the spheres
On which he shines, will, in the rolling years

Of the eternity to come, yet fade,
Like that lone star. The season yet will come,
When all the cycles by this system made,
Will seem as one dim glance at childhood's home,
To him who, from the height of seventy years,
Surveys life's chequered vale. Ye doubts and fears
Begone! for there is life beyond the tomb.
There is a voice that man can never hush,
With all his sophistry; a hope, whose bloom
Will ever live, which hell can never crush;
An inward influence that propels us on
To greater good, to nobler eminence
In the bright realms of purity, which sense
Can never fully grasp. The sun that shone
On our first parents, ere their fatal fall,
Will shine again, with brighter radiance, on
The good man's soul. Till then, he strives with all
His palsied powers to sound the depths profound,
And scale the dizzy heights of the *Unknown*.
His secret aspirations gushing forth,
And evermore increasing, will bear down,
As on they flow, th' impediments of earth.
His language this:—
“Father of all! I pine, I die;

My spirit burns to know and be ;
My strong desires, earth, air, and sea,
Inflame, and lead me on to thee.
Eternal shadows, dim and high,
Rising to the inmost heaven,
Or to creation's frontiers driven,
Hang round my path incessantly.
A path how glorious ! gemm'd with flowers
Of immortality,
Where walketh poesy,
In Heaven-born majesty ;

And scattereth round her radiant showers
Of light celestial, whose lustre shines
Through mind's broad mazy realms, where deepest
mines
Of treasured pearly thoughts are shown to view ;
Or, glowing through each starry fold
Of Heaven's aërial blue,
It lighteth up with living gold
The glorious mansions of earth's mighty dead !
Immortal spirits who for ever tread
Ethereal halls ; whose constant food
Is their own thoughts ; their consecrated drink,

Th' Eternal Spirit's smile. In blissful mood,
Pursuing their own way, they find their heaven ;
And, as on earth, though angel-powers are given,
Their greatest happiness is still *to think*.
As boomings of the ever-rolling sea,
Or distant shouts of the vast multitude,
Come o'er the soul in Nature's solitude,
So their inspiring voices come to me,
And thrill with heavenly ecstacy,
With aspirations grand,
After that immortal land.
Oh ! that my food
Might be the good
And greatness of its purity.
Great Spirit pour thy quickening breath
On the dry bones around ;
Come, rushing mighty sound !
Command them from the shades of Death.
Eternal shadows, dim and high,
Rising to the inmost heaven,
Or to creation's frontiers driven,
Haunt my path incessantly.
Rise, rise, thou glorious sun !
Who shin'st on meanest worm,

Ere my day's work is done,
And give these shadows form.
Shine all the landscape o'er;
Each object bring to view;
Oh! live for evermore,
The beautiful and true.

But brief the blissful hour the "better voice"
Inspires. Although it biddeth us rejoice,
How soon the pealings of the bugle-horn,
From our gay comrades, on the breezes borne,
Awake us from our trance, who back to earth
The spirit call, with their obstreperous mirth.

Ah! brief the hour beneath our favourite oak
We loiter, listening its delicious talk,
With closed park-gate, of those we dearly love,
Who in our presence ever chastely strove
To hide the flame they felt; yet, blushing, made
Their full confession 'neath its sacred shade.

Oh! precious are these old oak histories;
Dear to the soul are those deep mysteries,
Which they to hearts susceptible reveal.

Like breath of flowers, or music's tone, they steal
Through the still chambers of the musing mind,
And fill the soul with love to all mankind.
The spring of sensibility unsealed,
Forth gush its waters round the inner field,
Where grow our treasured flowers of thought, whose
bloom

With bright, unchanging freshness, cheer the gloom,
Of low'ring skies. In each wood-nook of life,
Where nettles rank, and every weed are rife,
The poet's simple wild flowers spring,
And o'er the tainted air their fragrance fling.

And, Tennyson ! who recks it, if the world
Their bloom and redolence discover not ;
For soon, if noted, would they be forgot,—
Their tendrils broken,—and their blossoms whirled
Into some forest hollow, far away
By dreary, wintry winds, there to decay.

But the true poet bows not at the shrine
Of this world's wisdom : higher is his aim,
And higher the reward he seeks. His flame
Is from his God : his hopes no less Divine.

The flowers of Beauty which he fondly rears,
With gentle hand, survive the fleeting years
Of Time's applause, and freshest will appear
When spread with friendship's hand upon his bier,
And will for ever live in fadeless bloom.

One of the anointed priesthood, don thy robe
Of spotless purity ; by Heaven's high grace,
Make thou thy residence the holy place
Of the most High ! and to the listening globe,
Whate'er the oracle commands thee to proclaim,
Oh ! *utter*, Tennyson ! in the Eternal's name.

MY NATIVE HILLS.

I SING the everlasting hills, that rear
Their giant forms around my moorland home,—
A lowly home, 'tis true, but far more dear
Than place and wealth beneath Victoria's dome.
O, mighty mountains, noble, high and hoar !
Proudly and firm ye stand, as ever, now ;
Nor lightning's flash can scathe, nor thunder's roar,
Nor time, can bend your everlasting brow.
Proud guardians of my native vale, I raise
My humble, glowing numbers in your praise.

Cradled amid the storms that whirl around
Your dauntless breasts, my youthful footsteps roved
Among your fastnesses. There was I bound
By nature's charms—by nature's charms beloved.
Surrounded by your torrents' music wild!
Sequestered in your fairy solitude,
She reared the mind of your admiring child,
And led him to the Great, the Wise, the Good !
Brought forth and reared beneath your silent shade,
There, too, may my lone corse be lowly laid.

Oh ! how I love to climb your purple peaks,
When golden sunbeams flood your noble crests ;
And thence to view the western sky, with streaks
Of richest tints adorned ; while calmly rests
The landscape, stretching far, in deep repose.
'Tis then—when feelings holy and serene
Steal o'er the mind—when every breeze that blows
Is fraught with bliss—we think what would have
been
This gloomy, wretched, and apostate earth,
Had Sin, the horrid monster, ne'er had birth.

Or, when dread Winter holds his iron sway,

And battling elements around you roar,
Alone, among your haunts, I love to stray,
And listen to the storm-sprite's shriek, as o'er
Your reeling heads he sails; while deaf'ning, deep,
Reverberating thunder rolls along
Your rugged sides, or down some awful steep
Darts till it spends itself the glens among.—
Oh! then, with palpitating heart, how grand
To view the flashing, swift-descending brand!

Ye fill the mind with images sublime,
Which aspirations after what is great
And good beget,—which, nor the hand of time,
Nor death itself can e'er obliterate.
Yes, ye are agents, like the simple flower,
Of God, that stamp in characters of flame
His nature's impress with resistless power
Upon the glowing soul; and loud proclaim
His wisdom and His glorious majesty,
Who is for ever wrapt within his own eternity.

CHILDHOOD.

COME, sweet enchantress of my early days,
Infuse thy genial warmth into my breast;
Let me as erst, once more, Oh! let me gaze
On the loved form that oft the nursling blest.
Let me thy fairy hand again but kiss!
And from thy sparkling chalice quaff full draughts of
bliss.

Long, long before my untaught lips could tell
The secret workings of my youthful mind, .
I felt the influence of thy magic spell;
And oft through fancy's regions, unconfined,

Led on by thee, my new-fledged soul on high
Would soar to realms of light beyond the azure sky.

O then, at dewy morn, or evening calm,
How did the landscape charm my glowing heart !
Oh ! with what joy I drank the south wind's balm,
And gazed and gazed till tears of bliss would start,
With power ecstatic, from their hidden spring,
While with my buoyant shouts I made the woodland
ring.

Ah ! then the sun shone brighter far than now ;
The forest flowers a sweeter fragrance shed ;
A mellower music trilled the streamlet's flow,
As it rolled sparkling e'er its pebbly bed ;
And fairer far the smiling valley where,
In peace and innocence, I rov'd—all devoid care.

Blest days ! I oft times think of you and weep ;
For nought ye yielded but unmixed delight.
My draughts of pleasure then were sweet and deep ;
No warring tempests spread their baneful night ;
But all was joyance through the flower-gemm'd way,
And bright heart-cheering radiance through the cloud-
less day.

Yet, though I weep, I still would not repine,
Nor vainly question heaven's supreme decrees ;
For heaven is good, and good is its design,
In blending storms with sunshine and the breeze.
More sweet is rest to him who needs repose ;
More dearly prized life's joys when blended with its
woes.

Oh ! how the sun of our blest childhood's days
Shoots gleaming down the vista of the past.
How brightly round the woe-worn heart it plays,
And soothes to holy calm life's bitterest blast,
Infusing through the soul that tranquil joy,
Which all the varied ills of life can ne'er destroy.

Oh ! yes, let sorrow spread its darkest gloom
Around the weary way of after years ;
The flowers of childhood still in beauty bloom ;
And, while their fragrant breath the spirit cheers,
And o'er the heart diffuses halcyon peace,
They tell of glorious climes where care and sorrow
cease.

A MORNING ON THE MOUNTAINS.

LIFT up your heads, ye Yorkshire hills !
Lift up your noble heads on high ;
Your venerable grandeur fills
With awe my heart, with tears my eye.
A lonely bard doth fondly hie
His way among your wavy woods ;
The bustling world let others try,
The only wish his breast intrudes,
Is for the quiet of your solitudes.

Bland Peace ! come, lead me to thy home
Amid those green withdrawing vales.
Where streams, fresh from the mountains, roam,
In sun and shade, and murmur tales
Of gentle love, as evening pales,
To the wild flowers that coyly peep
Down on their breast,—till rising gales
Do gently rock each one to sleep,
While stars, their sister flowers, their vigils keep.

Come ! and to broom-clad moorlands lead
My buoyant spirit far away,
Where I, from useless babbling freed,
Can greet the first approach of day ;
When Phœbus, in his bright array,
From Ocean springs, and floods the crest
Of dewy hill, or arching spray
Of flashing waterfall, or breast
Of lake that slumbers in unbroken rest.

Through orient climes, o'er Indian plains,
The glittering steeds come from afar,
And scatter from their dazzling manes
The golden light ; their hot breaths mar

Night's beauties ; for each twinkling star,
And harvest moon in pallor fade,
As swift the bright stupendous car
Sweeps through the heavens ; whose splendours
braid,
With lustrous tints, yon eastern vast arcade.

Lo ! tripping o'er the mountain, comes
Blithe Health ! whose form against heaven's blue
In beauty glides, enwreathed with blooms
All dripping with the glistening dew,
Young smiling Morn she doth pursue ;
And from her sparkling chalice pours
The enlivening nectar for the few
Who, filled with love for birds and flowers,
Leave couches for the wood-crowned mountain-bowers.

Hark ! how the brightening welkin rings
With the full flush of melody
From verdant vales ; and wood-nook springs
O'er cressy bed, 'neath golden sky,
Send forth their rills, which merrily
Warble along the forest glade,
And mirror every plant and tree

That kisses them ; then half afraid
Steal, like a maiden coy, into the woodland shade.

Nature, thy beauties are a boon
From heaven to feed the immortal soul.
I love the balmy morn—high noon—
Or placid eve. The flowing bowl
Of bliss—dipped in the streams that roll
Through thy fair realms—aye passes round
For man, though damnèd spirits foul,
Would dash it still with woe ;—disowned
By Heaven, they fain would plant man's mortal wound.

Though not one foot of earth I own,
Yet all the beauteous earth is mine ;
For me are laughing flow'rets strewn ;
For me a glorious sun doth shine ;
For me doth wave the mountain-pine,
Neath gilded skies, 'mid frost and snow,
To cheer life's gloom ;—a hand Divine
Doth all these precious gifts bestow,
To bless the hopeful wanderer below.

Eternal mountains ! let me climb

Your heights ; and with an ardent eye
View earth at this most holy time,
While universal charity
Urges my honest earnest prayer on high,
That as yon glorious sun doth chase
The darkness from that western sky,
Heaven's brighter sun, with quickened race,
May drive the gloom of sin from earth's fair face.

THE DYING DAUGHTER TO HER
INFIDEL FATHER.

“ The hour is come ! the hour is come !
My father I must hence.
My eyes grow dim, my senses swim,
Death’s shades become more dense.
Oh ! in this dark, this dreadful hour,
Whose aid must I implore ?
Speak, father dear, the hour draws near
When I shall be no more.

“ Must I believe what thou hast taught,
Or what my mother’s tongue,

With anxious care, and fervent prayer,
Has taught my whole life long ?
Speak ! must I spurn the Nazarine,
And trample on his blood :
And madly brave the rushing wave,
Of Jordan's swelling flood ?"

Those accents pierced the father's heart,
They melted down his soul ;
With features wild, he viewed his child,
With grief beyond control.
He saw the sepulchre's dark shades
Were gathering thick and fast ;
He felt his heart with terror start ;
He heard the trumpet's blast.

It echoed o'er the vaulted heavens ;
It shook both earth and hell ;
The stars all fled ; it roused the dead ;
It shook his faith as well.
" *Believe the truths thy mother taught !*"
He cried in accents wild ;
And in his arms, with frenzied love,
He clasped his dying child.

“ Oh ! father, now I die in peace,”
She said, as on his breast
She laid her head, and joined the dead
In their eternal rest.
The father kissed his withered flower ;
And in that solemn hour,
He kissed the rod a gracious God
Had sent in love and power.

MY CHILD.

FAIR children!—why they're common, and their death
Is common too, and so I used to think ;
But how life's rising sun doth clear the haze
Of its dim dawn ! My lot has been to gaze
Since then upon a flower which on the brink
Of life a moment bloomed, and whose breath
Awhile perfumed my sacred cottage bower
With more than sweets of Araby. The dower
I deem'd divine ;—an ornament bestowed
To beautify and grace my lov'd abode ;

And, though that flower did neither toil nor spin,
No Eastern Queen in all her glory dress'd,
Could with it vie ; by genial winds caress'd,
Its kindness did the heart's best feelings win.
Love it exhaled, because with love imbued ;
How did it charm my mountain solitude !
Too soon the storm swept o'er the moorlands wild,
And nipp'd the budding beauties of my child.
But such are common ! ay, when they upspring
In other soil ; for then the pretty thing
May please this hour—the next forgotten be,
But if our own, 'tis for eternity.

Pure was the life that nestled in thy breast,
A transient earthly—now a heavenly guest.
I gazed, how often ! through the window of thy soul,
And saw these bright transparent waters roll,
Along the secret channels of thy heart,
That vernal beauty spread in every part ;—
A gentle current from the crystal sea
That flows around the throne of Deity ;
And saw reflected there, in purest guise,
The changeless beauties of heaven's paradise,
Its innocence, its love, and purity,

Were mirror'd to my mind, dear child, in thee.
Thou wast, but art not, and the place on earth
That knew thee once will know thy form no more ;
But in the book of Being stands thy birth,
Recorded by the hand of Him who o'er
Thy destiny presides. Thou wast and art !
And ever must be while the Eternal lives.
I feel that thou art now as near my heart
As the incarnate God himself, who gives
My soul all those immortal hopes which yet,
When done my day's work in the vale of Time,
I trust, will raise my spirit to that clime
Where tears are changed to smiles—and suns will
never set.

Meantime there's not a sound that from the shore,
Which thou hast gain'd, comes o'er life's restless sea;
There's not a vision of its scenes floats o'er
My mind, revealing its deep mystery ;
Nor thought, that with immortal beauty dress'd,
Springs up and animates my grief-fraught breast ;
Nothing of heaven conceived—nor form I see
Of earthly bliss, but blends itself with thee.
O, happy child ! sublimely great that bliss
Which knows no fear of ever being less ;

That happiness must be indeed divine
Which feeds on its enjoyments—such is thine.
Live on ! and in immortal stature grow ;
Live on ! and emulate each seraph's glow.
Live on ! the higher raised, the humbler bow
To Him who rolls the planet in its sphere,
Who sees and wipes the lonely orphan's tear ;
To Him who was, and is, and must be first,
Who waked and can alone quench thy immortal thirst.

MY NATIVE GLENS.

LONE wandering in my native glens remote
From men, in nature's wilds how sweet to stray,
While the lone blackbird's soft mellifluous note
Is heard in plaintive strains at close of day;—
When twilight gently deepens all around,
And veils in mellow shades the prospect fair,
'Tis Eden, for in every sight and sound
The Everlasting One in majesty walks there.

The spirit, hampered by the ills of life,
Here finds a season brief of calm repose ;
Rest from the world's conflicting scenes of strife ;
A respite from humanity's deep woes.

The balmy breath of forest flowers sports round,
In playfulness, the aching, grief-scarred brow ;
The wearied mind, in reverie profound,
Is lull'd to tranquil rest by the calm streamlet's flow.

Come, pensive Melancholy, come ! meet form
To grace a solitary scene like this ;
Come to my heart ; no frost now nips—no storm
Comes with rude breath to mar our mutual bliss.
Pastoral beauty decks the landscape dim ;—
Secluded wood—paths under star-lit skies
Invite our steps ; and hidden songsters hymn,
In sweetest harmony, their forest melodies.

Oh ! beauteous goddess, now I feel thy power,
I catch the glances of thy melting eye,
The soft sensations which my soul come o'er,
With holy impulse, tell me thou art nigh,
Thou fair illuminator of the soul ;
Thou gushing spring of intellectual fire ;

Thy humble wooer owns thy kind control,
And pours, for thee, the music of his humble lyre.

Thou! gentle one, hast often hushed to peace
The stormy passions that invade the mind
Of the lone bard, who, glad of his release
From worldly cares—in happy ease reclined,
Has sweetly dreamed of childhood's flowery home—
Of treasures deep enshrined within the heart;
While dear and long departed ones have come
With radiant smiles their soothing influence to impart.

Or, led by thee, through fancy's boundless world,
Above the starry-fretted vault of heaven,
What holy visions hast thou oft unrolled
To my tranced gaze—what raptures have they
given!
How pleasant thus in mossy dell to lie,
And snatch from bygone days life's dearest flowers;
Or view, while fast the happy moments fly,
Our future home, with hopes to gain its blissful bowers.

Oh! yes, I love these glens; thou evening star

Bear witness to my passion deep and strong ;
For thou hast wandered with me near and far,
 Their silent shades and green retreats among.
Here, joining nature in her tuneful strain
 Of vocal praise to her Creator's name,
'Tis sweet to worship in this glorious fane,
While woodland voices fan devotion's holy flame.

MOONLIGHT MUSINGS.

Lo ! o'er yon purple mountains high,
The draperies of darkness drear,
Thick gathering, to the eye appear
Stretching across the eastern sky ;
And onward, through the realms of twilight grey,
Old Night pursues the fast retreating King of Day.

Far o'er the spacious fields of heaven,
In dread array, he spreads around
His darksome elements profound,
That on the rough gale fiercely driven,
Fly o'er his empire wild in sullen gloom,
Intent light, life, and verdant beauty to entomb.

But, quickly travelling in his rear,
Day's sister, like a lovely Queen,
With stately step, yet modest mien,
In full-orb'd glory does appear,
And rolls her shining floods of mellow light
Against the leaden, tow'ring battlements of night;

Or, o'er their heights most placidly
She pours her rays, and gilds the piles
Of clouds which look like fairy isles
Surrounded by a shining sea;
Or worlds that round her as their centre sail,
Till shattered into fragments by the rising gale.

Then, with a vivid lustre, gleams
The circling parapets along,
Of vast aërial castle strong,

Which, as if struck by lightning, seems,
Amid the peeling thunders loud and deep,
To reel and tumble earthward with a mighty sweep.

And now victorious she sweeps,
With pride along her glorious way,
Among the massive ruins grey,
That lie around in gorgeous heaps :
Then rises, with a halo round her beauteous form,
The mistress of the night, and conqueror o'er the
storm.

Thus, through the universe, cried I,
Wherever pitched the battle plain,
The light of Truth must ever reign
Triumphantly, however high
The powers of darkness lift their hateful heads,
Or, far and wide, their deep Egyptian night-glooms
spread.

Yes, blessed Truth ! thou shedd'st thy ray
O'er error's dreary leaden sky,
And all its misty shadows fly
Down to the Stygian gulf away :

Thou still art conqueror ! howe'er thy foes have striven
To crush thy strength ; nor strange, when 'tis the will
 of heaven.

March forward on thy glorious path,
Thou beauteous one ! armed by that power
 Omnipotent ; full fast the hour
Speeds on its way, when hell's fierce wrath,
And every foe on earth, shall bow to thy blest sway,
And all the nations bask in one unclouded day.

AN EVENING VOLUNTARY.

No. 1.

UPON the brow of yonder verdant hill,
O'erlooking many a green romantic vale,
Lo ! one of England's fanes erects its head—
A sacred monument for God—to men,
A gracious monitor. For age on age,
Like to a mighty chronicler of Time,
It has maintained its proud position there ;
Time's changes noting, but itself unchanged,

It rises out the bosom of the earth,
A guardian-spirit of the scene around,
And points pure virtue to the starry sky ;
And with a voice that echoes through the vales,
Brightening the eye of trusting piety,
Proclaims the tidings, "Immortality!"
At whose glad sound the good man's bosom heaves
With joyous hope—his glowing soul upsprings
Into the regions of unending love,
And tastes the earnest of its future home.

The votaries of vice it seems to point
Down to its feet, where, scattered all around,
The mouldering ashes of the villagers,
And those who lived among the hills and vales
It overlooks, lie low beneath its shade ;
And to the poor deluded wanderers,
It trumpets forth, with Sinai's majesty,
Its righteous judgments on their evil course.

From out the glowing west—which now appears
From north to south—a brilliant flood of light
Rolls o'er the gorgeous battlements of heaven,
And gilds the clouds that o'er the welkin float,

Like guardian-angels wrapped in lily robes,
Fresh from their native clime. They seem to view
With wonder and delight our beauteous earth ;
And, while they trace the ravages of Time—
See all the dread effects of Sin and Death,
With all the ills of human life—and weep !
They still remember the intent of Heaven,—
That 'tis the fiat of the Mighty One,
This earth shall yet be blessed and free ; and man,
Poor erring man, shall be reclaimed—forgiven.

And now their radiant faces they unveil,
Which beam with happiness unspeakable.
Methinks I hear, in rich celestial tones,
Their voice, in tender sympathy and love,
Bid suffering humanity “hope on ;”
Then to their glorious home they soar,
Amid the peans of angelic choirs.

Still onward rolls the sparkling stream of light
O'er all the glorious landscape stretching far,
Gilding the crests of undulating hills,
That lift in pride their heads on every hand,
Like waves of one vast, ever-rolling sea,

That bears its billows from the glorious West,
On to the yawning caverns of the East ;
Or bathes their verdant sides, decked with the stars
Of earth, which, in their variegated hues,
Appear as beautiful as those of heaven.
Now flashing on the lonely woodland pools ;
Now lighting up each wood-embowered glen ;
Now dancing in the forest's high arcades ;
Now steeping wavy woods, whose glittering leaves,
All honey-glazed, are quivering in the breeze
Of eve ; then o'er the purple moorland sweeps,
And fills each heather-bell with liquid gold.

List ! from yon tower the bells pour forth a tide
Of melody, that to the aching heart
Speaks peace ; and soothes to sweet forgetfulness
Its fears and pains. The charmèd Zephyrs stop
Upon their balmy way to catch the sounds
Elysian, then spread their wings, and bear
Them through each winding vale, each silent glen,
And fairy nook, till the whole scene is full
Of heavenly, soul-inspiring harmony.

How many hearts have listened to the strains,

That now rest on the bosom of the earth !
How many hear them now, and, with a sigh,
Revert to other days ;—before whose vision
Dim images of well-remembered shapes
Appear, with lights and shades, with calms and storms,
Of by-gone life—whose tale will soon be told ;
Leaving the world to other hands and hearts,
To manage its affairs, and moralise
On all the deeds which they have writ upon
The page of Time. Thus are its pages filled,
Until the last receives the signature
Of the dread Angel, iris-crown'd, when all will close,
Like the departing glory of this hour ;
Thus will earth's generations pass away.

AN EVENING VOLUNTARY.

No. II.

FREED from the turmoil of the world, once more
I walk in Nature's holy grounds, and find
The peace and joy which rural scenery
And calm retirement ever do impart.
The sun now sinks behind the Western hills,
And from the depths of his pavilion,
Surrounded by its gorgeous drapery,
He casts a parting glance down the green vale.

And fills with gladness the gay songsters' breasts,
That sing their evening psalm of praise to Him
Who gives them life and all their sylvan joys.
Nor are less happy those whose peaceful lives
Are spent in such delightful nooks of earth,
Afar removed from its vain, noisy scenes.
The sunlight, flashing from yon cottage panes,
Marks the sweet spot where nestles many a home,
Upon the green hill side, or on the skirt
Of heathery moorland, where domestic joys
And virtuous love—such as are seldom found
In the gay city's artificial life,
Rife with conventionalities and forms
Of etiquette that make dull life a load,—
Bless the inhabitants with calm content,
And peaceful days. I hear the gladsome shouts
Of mountain children come across the vale,
As, with a joyous bound, they dart away
Into the oft-frequented glen, to spend
The evening hours in merry, careless play.
Hark! now their voices warble forth clear strains
Of rich wild music rising to the sky,
And blending with the infinite. How swells
My heart with pure delight while, all entranced,

I listen to their artless song. No roof,
Adorned with the magnificence of art,
Confines the gushing, simple melody ;
It rises on the soft free winds of heaven,
And mingles with the music of the spheres.
“ God bless the innocents ! ” is my heart’s prayer,
“ Grant them long life, and may these smiling vales
And pine-clad hills e’er echo with their songs ;
Free as the limpid streams that dance along
These mossy dells, and pure as free be all
Their joyous thoughts. Oh ! may the images
Which Nature stamps upon their glowing hearts,
Expanding and refining them, e’er prove
A never-failing source of happiness ;
Build up their characters in all that’s good
And kind towards their fellow-men and God,
And pave their path to immortality.”

The moorland tarn in placid beauty lies,
Reflecting its green margin, interspersed
With purple heather-bells and golden broom.
While, far below, the rosy sunset clouds
Float on through the infinitude of space,
Like messengers of the Eternal, bound

To some far world, with tidings of His will ;
And deeper still appear the glowing stars,
Those foot-prints of the Deity, to roll
In silence, telling to a doubting world
The being of a God. How grand the thought
Of sweeping through the vast, profound abyss,
On eagle pinion safe upborne, to view
Creation's mighty wonders, and to trace
Those wonders to their glorious source—the great,
The everlasting God. How grateful thus
To sit and ruminate in some lone glen,
Or by the side of some clear moorland lake,
And dive, in spirit-thought, into the depths
Of dread Eternity. A few more years
Of earnest struggling, 'mid the good and bad
Of this world's chequered scenes, and then the soul
Must wing its lonely flight to the *Unknown* ;
And with the grandeur and sublimity
Of scenes immortal mingle future life,
Or muse, in Desolation's dark and drear
Domain, in lonely misery, o'er life
Misspent on earth, and hopes for ever lost.
Who would not then retire, betimes, from all
That damps the spirit's energies, to muse

In rural solitude ? and send his thoughts
Before him to the theatre, where soon—
Just in the character he here assumes—
He must appear—before the assembled world,
And, 'mid the damning hisses of the lost,
Or the rewarding plaudits of the saved,
For ever play his fixed, allotted part.

Oh ! tell me not of wealth ; though it hath power
For good or evil, as the sordid or
The generous soul of its possessor prompts.
It grasps the good of which the virtuous
Soul is oft denied, and oft, too oft, alas !
The golden road to swift destruction leads.
Oh ! tell me not of pleasure ; only such
As Heaven approves and is befitting man,
Who, than the angels, is but little lower ;
The flowers which strew its path too often hide
The serpent soul, whose piercing sting is death.
The soul needs more than these can e'er afford.
Give me by skill of mind, by honest toil,
To gain a competence, my humble wants will meet,
A small provision for the claims of age,
So that life's sunset be but chequered by

The clouds of common ills. No more than this
I ask of this world's good. Those who wish more
I envy not—their covetous desire,
Or cumbersome possessions. Give to me
A heart of purity, that all mankind
In its enlarged embrace enclasps!—that leads
Away to Nature's temple, there to view,
From flower to star, and from the mountain rill
On to the ever-booming sea, the hand
Of Him, at whose august command sprung forth
The universe, in all its grandeur clothed.
Each object in creation, rightly viewed,
Leads up the inquiring spirit to its God.
I feel the kind impressions Nature makes;
They fill with strong desires for what is pure,
And stamp God's image on the loving heart.

That sunset scene, how beautiful and calm!
Those purple hills! how truly grand they rise
From out the bosom of the earth! Those pines!
How gracefully they wave their stately forms
To the soft evening breeze, as on it floats,
So gently to its far-off northern home.
And thou, my native stream, who wanderest on

In pensive loneliness along thy way,
By foot of beetling crags, and 'mid the groves
That clothe and beautify the winding vale.
O, crystal Luddon ! thee I dearly love !
Lulled by thy voice in infancy to rest,
And wandering through my youth on thy green banks,
Indulging dreams that oft have gladdened life ;
In manhood sweet associations bind
My heart to thee by many a tender tie.
While wandering by thy side, the truest views
Of life I've had—the firmest basis laid
For future bliss. The dust of those I loved
In life, reposes near thy verdant banks.
My fathers laid them down, within the sound
Of thy sweet voice, to wait the awful morn,
Whose dawn shall be the last to gladden earth ;
And, when my work is done, I too would join
My dust with theirs and, soothed by thee to rest,
In joyful hope would sleep the sleep of death.

TO AN EARLY PRIMROSE.

WILD flower! with fond admiring eyes
Do I behold thy fragile stem !
At sight of thee what feelings rise
Of hope and joy, thou lovely gem !

Rock'd in the rushing wintry storm,
That sweeps along the snow-clad vale,
Thou bravely rear'st thy frail form
Amid the perils of the gale.

To all alike that pass thee by,
Thou lookest up, and seem'st to say,
That "bright and sunny months are nigh,
Hope on ! and dash your tears away—

“ And dreary though the landscape be,
Still onward stretch your fearful view ;
Pierce through the gloom around—and see,
Is there *no* good in store for you ?

“ I am from God ; he placed me here,
The emblem of his faithfulness ;—
The promise of another year
Of plenty, peace, and happiness.

“ This is my mission from His throne ;
And if I do but cheer *one* heart,
Content am I to bloom alone,—
To live my hour, and then depart.”

O welcome art thou, gentle flower,
An early blessing, kindly given ;
Thy silent eloquence hath power
To raise the soul from earth to heaven.

“AWAY YE GLOOMY THOUGHTS.”

AWAY, ye gloomy thoughts ! that make
The joys of life your prey ;—
That make more slow the tardy night—
More dark the gloomy day ;—
That to the darker scenes of life
A deeper shade impart,
And *curses* make those blessings sent
To cheer the drooping heart.

Hence ! brooding Melancholy, hence !

Nor longer dare intrude

Within our path, to steal the flowers

That are so thinly strew'd.

God sent those flowers, so beautiful,

So sweet, so full of bloom,

To cheer us through this weary world

Of cank'ring care and gloom.

Cheérless and chill are life's rude blasts ;

Its biting frosts severe ;

Yet oft o'er ills that never come

We shed the bitterest tear.

The world is but a weary place ;

But, ah ! we often find

Its dark, as well as brighter scenes

Are mirror'd from the mind.

Though sin has marr'd the beautiful,

That once made earth so fair ;

There still are traits of beauty left

To drive away despair.

Though we through dark, perplexing scenes

Have oft to grope our way,

Yet still, blest thought! that light is given
Which leads to endless day.

Oh! for that happy, cheerful mind,
Content with blessings given,—
That seeks to do the good it can,
And leaves the rest to heaven ;—
'Tis that whose longest path through life
Is strewn with sweetest roses ;
And with blest confidence, in death,
On Jesu's breast reposes.

TO A YOUNG PRODIGAL.

YOUNG man ! a word or two with thee—
Come, tell me wherefore dost thou roam ?
Why dost thou thus perversely flee
The comforts of a happy home ?
Is it because a father dear
Has interposed his right to stay
Thee in thy rash, thy mad career
To death. Is this thy reason, pray ?

Or is't because a mother kind,
Who ever sought thy highest good,

Has crossed, for once, thy wayward mind,
That thou assum'st this sullen mood ?
Or is't because a sister's love
Has prompted her to thwart thy will ?
In that she could not look above,
And calmly help to work thine ill.

Or is thy heart, free as the lark,
On base and worldly pleasures bent ?
If so, pursue thy course ; but hark !
Thou soon wilt bitterly repent.
Awhile gay pleasure's noisy stream
May lull thee to delusive rest ;
But soon will pass the pleasing dream,
And deep remorse will fill thy breast.

Thou now mayst boldly, bravely boast
That thou art happy, gay, and free ;
But ah ! look on to time's rough coast,
And think, young man, how thou wilt be.
Thou now mayst vent thy venom'd spite,
And pour thy bitter curse on those
Who ever laboured, day and night,
To feed thy joys and ease thy woes.

And canst thou thus requite the care
Thy sire bestowed, the love he felt ;
The tender, earnest, heartfelt prayer,
He breathed, when round the altar knelt ?
Canst thou forget thy mother's tears,
When deep affliction brought thee low ;
Her bitter anguish, hopes, and fears,
While bending o'er thy burning brow ?

Canst thou forget the happy days,
That in thy sister's sunny smiles
Thou'st basked ; her loving blue-eyed gaze
When she has played her harmless wiles ?
In pleasure's bowers there may be flowers,
But transient is their loveliness.
Search all thy hours with all thy powers,
There's nothing like domestic bliss.

Those scenes may, for a time, destroy
A sense of guilt, and yield delight ;
But soon, full soon, all these will cloy,
And conscience stern assert her right.
'Tis vain to quaff the maddening drink,
With gay associates to dwell ;

Thou *must*, thou canst not help but think,
And those dark thoughts will make thy hell.

Rash youth ! be wise, retrace thy steps !
Oh ! yet forgiveness may be found !
A parent's love has heights and depths,
That line can't scale, nor plummet sound.
Return ! there's hope ; proceed ! there's none ;
Despair will haunt thy wretched path.
And oh ! thy lot, when life is gone,
Will be divine, consuming wrath !

LIFE.

LIFE, life, immortal life !
To be and never cease to be !
O ! deep and wond'rous mystery—
Birth without death—a ceaseless strife,
With burning glow
To search and know
The hidden truths of dread Eternity.

On from the shoreless sea,
The overflowing, sparkling stream
Dances through Time. Our fitful dream,

Soon past, into Eternity
We drop. From earth,
When tried our worth,
We pass again up to the Great Supreme.

Immortal life—from first !
But then (put off this mortal dress,
And robed in light), we onward press
To prouder eminence ; and thirst
For purer rills,
From nobler hills,
And brighter visions of unclouded bliss.

O for one blessed glance—
From the celestial, flowery mount,
Whence gushes the eternal fount—
Around creation's vast expanse ! ..
O then would be
Life's mystery
Unfolded free,
And earth be valued at its just amount.

A SUMMER EVENING SCENE.

Thy charms are ever new, fair Nature!—here,
Beneath this wood-spring's deep sequestered shade,
How sweet to ruminate! while here and there
The sunlight dances in the verdant glade;

Or, through the trees, in shafts of burnished gold,
Darts down into the lonely woodland lake,
Whose placid waters to the eye unfold
A fairy land of skies, fields, flowers, and brake.

The holy quiet of my native vale
Comes o'er me with an influence sweet and calm ;
The gentle, harvest-scented evening gale
Spreads all around a spirit-soothing balm.

Bright amber clouds, high o'er the distant hills,
Sail peacefully along the western sky ;
And music from the neighbouring moorland rills,
In silvery strains, by zephyrs borne, floats by.

The golden day-streaks gently fade away ;
The shades and dews of eve as gently fall ;
The harvest moon sheds down her mellow ray
Upon the scene, and throws a charm o'er all.

Oh ! 'tis a season and a scene so sweet—
'Tis such a glimpse and taste of Eden's bliss !
That in this silent, wood-embowered, r^{es}treat,
I'd rest—environed round with happiness.

I love to bend my weary footsteps here,
For here the world's rude clamour reaches not ;
But Meditation checks each rising tear,
And all life's bitter sorrows are forgot.

Here would I rest; but, ah! it may not be.
Still must I sail along the tide of life;
Must steer my feeble bark o'er that dark sea,
Amid its battling elements of strife.

Well, be it so; still will I not repine.
Why should I seek exemption from life's ill?
With trust in God—in hope of help divine,
I'll brave it in obedience to his will.

Yet, 'tis relief to snatch but one short hour
From busy life, and taste the bliss sublime
In scenes like this, which Nature's fountains pour
Into the soul, Heaven's draughts—before the time!

CELANDINE LEAVES.

Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains, and of all that we behold,
From this green earth.

WORDSWORTH.

Never more !
Saddening words ! ye cast a shadow
 Round our pathway full of gloom,
Which, if lengthened out, would wither
 All the flowers that there may bloom ;
But affection's sun still gleameth,
 And exhales their sweet perfume.
 Sun, shine on !

Oh ! say not
Never more my feet shall wander,
 Through that dear romantic vale,
Where those sunny streams meander,

Round the mountain primrose pale.
Say not that our hearts are severed,—
Friendship's holy feelings fail !
Say not so.

Ever more
Nature blooms ! that pastoral landscape,
Which we viewed, is still the same ;
Poesy's shrine, at which we lingered,
With beauties deck'd that want a name,
Still invites our pilgrim footsteps,
And our heart's devoted flame,—
Ever more.

Ever more,
Ope but once the glorious portal,
Then appeareth light divine,
If but once the Dove immortal
With his wings the heart enshrine,
Then our skies, though often darkened,
Smile with roseate beams benign,—
Blessed thought ! for ever more.

STANZAS.

ONWARD, upward, soul ! and never
Yield thyself to dark despair :
Be thy motto " Hope, endeavour,"
Joined with earnest, heartfelt prayer.

Believe in universal goodness,
Beauteous as the starry sky ;
And though, alas ! as far remote,
Yet be thy every aim as high.

Hear'st thou not that voice that cometh
From Eternity's dim land ?
Spurn objections, scale the mountain,
On its summit take thy stand.

Brother, fix thine eye on heaven,
Take it not a moment thence,
And on, though hell obstruct thy path,
Trusting in Omnipotence.—

On into the field of harvest,
Thy every power for God employ ;
The more the sheaves thou bearest with thee,
The greater thine eternal joy.

THOUGHTS
SUGGESTED BY A WINTER SCENE.

THE fierce blast, from the icy North,
Sweeps on through leafless grove and tree ;
And, pendent from the wavy boughs,
Icicles trill sweet melody.

To the heart all music stealeth ;
O'er every grave-bound human clod
It tells of hope ;—each tone revealeth
The love and wisdom of a God.

Oh ! who hath wandered free and lonely,
'Mong the haunts round boyhood's home ;—
Or by the snow-clad mountain streamlets,
But there again hath longed to roam.

'Tis passing sweet to list their music,
As their waters flow along,
While the praise of their Creator,
Is the burden of their song.

I've listened to their distant murmurs
In the snowy glen untrod;
Or down the side of rocky mountain,
And their song was ever "God."

And as their soft strains gently faded,
Round the mountain hoar and high,
My full heart ached, as when is broken
Friendship's long endearing tie.

Then to the hills, whose broad foundations
Deeply in the earth are laid,
I've turned and gazed in silent awe;
And wandering in their mighty shade,

Would trembling ask them whence their source?
Who their builder? what their age?
Who upheld their towering forms,
Amid the howling tempest's rage?

Who had laid their craggy pathways ?
Only seen by vulture's eye,
Whose scream came mingling with the storm,
From out the rolling clouds on high.

Who their wavy foreheads planted ?
Who had clothed their heathery sod ?
And a thousand voices loudly
Thundered forth the answer " God."

The Ocean heard the mighty shout ;
Awhile Britannia bowed her rod ;
Then onward rolled again its waves
To every shore, and echoed " God."

The sparkling stars looked down from heaven,
And, catching up the glorious sound,
Re-echoed it, with deepening glow,
Along the azure dome profound.

And those bright spirits, ever living,
Blest in heaven's effulgent rays,
Joining in the glorious anthem
Filled their happy homes with praise.

HARVEST HYMN.

As from the sun, in one rich dazzling flood,
Blest light—heart-cheering light! for ever beams;
So too, from Thee, the All-wise, Kind, and Good—
The self-created Sun—for ever streams
One boundless flood of blessings, rich and free,
The wants of all Thy creatures to supply;
For all Thy creatures wait, great God, on Thee,
And thou again hast heard their needy cry.

In mercy hast Thou laid Thine anger by;
Once more hast Thou remembered us for good;
The kindling flashes of Thy fearful eye
Are softened into love. Our mouths with food,

In Thy prolific goodness, hast Thou fill'd—
Once more our drooping spirits hast Thou raised ;
The throbbing hearts of hungry ones are stilled ;
Oh ! be Thy blessed name for ever praised.

Down from Thy cloudy chambers has been poured
The rich, refreshing, fertilizing rain ;
And Thou hast sent Thy blessed sunlight, Lord,
To fructify each valley, hill, and plain.
Now, safely gathered-in the fruits of earth,
We lift to Thee, O God, our hymn of praise ;
But oh ! our tongues can never speak Thy worth,
For Thou art love and truth in all Thy ways.

Accept a nation's praise, Eternal One,
For the rich harvest reaped throughout our land.
Lowly, O God, we bend before Thy throne,
To bless Thee for thine interposing hand.
From every valley let thy praise ascend ;
From every hill let grateful notes arise ;
And all the people their glad voices blend,
In one harmonious anthem to the skies.

ANOTHER WORD ON WEALTH.

Oh ! give us riches ! is the earnest voice
Of eager men intent to clutch
The hard, red gold, whose very touch
Begets a look that says, this is our heart's just choice.

Oh ! give us riches ! is the trumpet cry,
Amidst the deafening din and strife,
That fill up every day of life,
As if none e'er had died, or e'er again would die.

“ Oh ! 'tis not in the power of wealth to give
Man^{kind} ~~the~~ bliss ; ”—so Christians say ;
Yet is the struggle day by day
For wealth ; too much, alas ! for this men plan and live.

“ Brethren, in riches put you not your trust,
For these take wings and fly away,”
The preacher’s voice is heard to say ;
Yet oft it is too plain the preacher is but dust.

Mammon rejoice ! thy votaries increase ;
Thine are the sterling hearts and true !
‘Tis but a poor and paltry few
Who walk a quieter path that leads to deeper peace.

“ But wealth is power.” Ah ! brother, so it is,
A power that binds men down to earth ;
For, gloating o’er their treasure’s worth,
Some spend their life, nor care for any higher bliss.

“ Poet, still wealth is power, say what you can ;
Makes it not men esteemed and great ?”
Well ! some do ever adulate
Him that hath wealth ;—some do prefer a poorer man.

Wealth is a power that lights the eye with pride,
And clothes the haughty lip with scorn ;
And thousands wish they’d ne’er been born,
Whom men of riches brow-beat, torture and deride.

A power that crushes oft the boasting brave,
Ay! oft proves ruin's very means;
For witness those heart-rending scenes,
Wealth sometimes paints—the horrid death, the un-
timely grave.

Though all do not thus bow at Mammon's feet,
And join the coarse insensate cry
For wealth, nor see the reason why
'Tis thought man's highest good;—we must again
repeat,

Mammon, rejoice! thy votaries increase;
Thine are the sterling hearts and true!
The world says 'tis a poor weak-headed few,
Who walk a quieter path that leads to deeper peace.

A NEW YEAR'S PSALM.

LIFE is precious ! yet, as ever :
It is marked by joy and woe ;
And amid its lights and shadows,
Do the nations come and go.

Shadows that are ever prompting
Yearnings after higher life ;—
Lights that seek to guide us safely
Through the present ceaseless strife.

Like a stream, Time bears us onward :
More distinctly every year,
Do the boominings of the ocean
Fall upon the list'ning ear.

And the wild voice of its surges
Through the heart a sadness sends,
Sounding like funereal dirges
Over our departed friends.

Deep the mysteries around us,
Whatsoe'er the preacher saith ;
And to solve them we must travel
Through the deeper shades of death.

But life still is precious ! never
Will we yield ourselves to fear ;
God hath been our help, and ever
Will be through each coming year.

Through the day of life's great battle,
Little time is there for rest ;
But our pathway ever leads us
Nearer to the glowing west.

In the silence of the midnight—
Gazing on some solemn star,
Oh ! what visions then come o'er us
Of the “ Better Land afar !”

Visions that are oft derided,—
Scouted by the worldly wise ;
Those who've found on earth their heaven,
Will not, cannot higher rise.

Pilgrim, lift thy head ! and bravely
Tread the path the good have trod ;
Dare the future ! thou shalt conquer,
Trusting in the might of God.

STANZAS,

WRITTEN ON READING OF THE DEPARTURE OF THE BRITISH
TROOPS FOR THE SEAT OF WAR IN THE CRIMEA.

HARK ! the trumpet now is pealing,
The Soldier is his bosom steeling,
Crushed is every tender feeling ;

Duty calls, he must obey—

See him dash the tear away.

England ! thy sons to battle go.

O God ! that e'er it should be so.

See ! they come, with banners flying,
In bravery with each other vieing ;
And their look, how death-defying,

As they march with steady tread,

Solemn as the silent dead !

Their country calls, and they must go ;

O God ! that e'er it should be so.

Cheering shouts the air are rending;
With them martial strains are blending,
As the warriors are wending
To the battle-field their way—
Men their fellow-men to slay.
On to a gory death they go.
O God! that e'er it should be so.

But amid the cheerful hailing!
There ascends the sound of wailing,
Bereft ones after them are trailing,
For one more glimpse—'twill be the last.
For, hark! the distant trumpet blast
Proclaims that onward still they go.
O God! that e'er it should be so.

Oh! what fond hearts have been broken!
What bitter farewells have been spoken!
What speechless looks deep grief betoken!
And thousands on the world are thrown
With none to pity, none to own—
Their guardians on to battle go.
O God! that e'er it should be so.

'Gainst bloody war the wise have striven,
Ten thousand prayers have flown to Heaven ;
And yet the challenge has been given ;
Proud might would triumph over right ;
But British Soldiers yet can fight—
Can prove their prowess o'er the foe.
O God of battles ! with them go.

England fears Thee, and her glory
Is to humbly bow before Thee,
In her need now to implore Thee
To espouse the righteous cause.
In the world's dread coming throes,
Be with her, and assist her still
To know and do Thy sovereign will.

•

God of Battles ! let Thy thunder
Break the tyrant's bands asunder,
And the world, with awful wonder,
See the might of Thy dread sword ;
Speak, Eternal One, the word !
Roll back War's threatening floods of woe,
And bring the haughty despot low.

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

TEARS flow space, and ease my heart,
For Nature bids ye flow ;
Those who have lost a darling child
Know well my weight of woe.

Tears flow apace, and ease my heart,
Flow faster still—flow deep ;
Did not incarnate Deity
At Bethany once weep ?

Poor mortals shrink at Death's cold touch ;
The grave is cold and drear ;
How hard to see its portals close
On those we hold so dear !

Hark ! onward through the gloomy vale,
The sullen waters roll !
Oh, keen the pangs to hear the plunge
Of a departing soul !

But cease to flow, ye welcome tears ;
However hard to part,
I see the dawning of a hope
That cheers my drooping heart.

Yes, I can stand beside thy grave,
And view the starry sky,
And fondly think how thy dear form
Will yet be raised as high.

I see thee in the train of Him
Who welcomed such on earth,
And feel that to be there is more
Than countless worlds are worth ;

For now thy infant warbling voice
Joins that celestial song.
Whose numbers shall for ever trill
From thy immortal tongue.

THE WIFE.

Oh! I remember oft the hour,
When first thine azure eyes met mine,
The tender glance whose winning power
Made my fond heart for ever thine.
And I remember too the grove.
Where thy soft voice in accents sweet,
First breathed to me the ardent love
Which made this heart with rapture beat.

Since then how oft those loving eyes
Have lighted up the darkest scene ;
How oft that sympathizing voice
Has to my heart a solace been.

When other friends would cast the glance
Of freezing coldness, thy sweet eyes,
With heartfelt love and joy, would dance,
And check my rising, plaintive sighs.

O ! cold may blow the bitter blast,
And rough may be life's restless tide ;
But times of sadness cannot last,
Whilst thou art, loved one, by my side.
Come sickness, health—come weal or woe,
I will not at my lot repine ;
Should every other comfort go,
I'm still content if thou art mine.

MAN TRAVELS TO THE TOMB.

WHATE'ER the changing scenes of life,

Or dark or bright the past,

Placid our walk, or fierce our strife,

No season long can last.

Whate'er the sympathy of friends,

Or deep the present gloom,

All earthly joy or sorrow ends,

Man travels to the tomb.

Pure and high may be our aim,

Deep love flash from the eye,

For the whole world a sacred flame
Of prayer may reach the sky ;
And for its good our efforts may
Our days and nights consume ;
Howe'er we wish earth's brighter day,
We travel to the tomb.

How pleasant into life to spring,
And range earth's paradise !
In thought, with an unwearied wing,
To rise,—and still to rise ;
To feel how grand it is to be
In man and nature's bloom ;
But there remains the mystery,
Man travels to the tomb.

The skies still blandly smile o'erhead,
The earth puts forth her green,
The streams roll to their ocean bed,
Night sheds her starry sheen ;
But skies may smile, and earth invite,
Flowers shed their sweet perfume,
Life's future path seem calm and bright,—
Man travels to the tomb.

Seasons roll on. Young Spring his flowers
Throws round our youthful feet ;
And gladsome are the Summer hours,
In after life we meet ;
But Autumn's short-lived mellow ray
Soon fades to Winter's gloom ;
And young, and old, the grave, the gay,
All travel to the tomb.

DREAM-LAND.

IN the silence of that dream-land,
Often do I think of thee,
While listening to the soothing strains
Of its unearthly melody.

O ! the grandeur of those mountains !
O ! the beauty of that home,
Where through glens by mossy fountains,
We so joyously did roam.

And when we gained the open moorland,
What a scene did we behold !
Ten thousand purple heather-bells,
All filled with liquid gold.

Far and wide the sunset glory
Poured its rich and pleasant light ;—
Bathing all within the valley ;
Gilding every fir-clad height.

And the tarn upon the moorland,
O ! how calmly did it lie,
While its bosom, like a mirror,
Caught the glory of the sky.

But not so the merry streamlet,
Which purled by our trysting bower,
How did its music soothe and bless
Our hearts that holy hour !

Yes, into those blissful moments
Were the joys of years comprest ;
There from toil earth's weary pilgrims
Found an interval of rest.

LOVE'S ABSENCE.

LIFE ! O 'tis a blessed thing !
Full of care though it may be ;
With music, hark ! the woodlands ring—
Note of song-bird—hum of bee.
But there is sweeter music far,
When woman's love-fraught voice is heard.
Then how brightly glows life's star,
How the human heart is stirred !
Ye who've listened to the strain,
Drunk its music day by day,
What on earth can give more pain
Than when your home-bird is away.

Cheering is the blessed light,
When it floods the verdant earth ;

Forgot is then the joyless night,
In the hopes that then have birth.
But there's a pleasure, dearer far.
When woman looks her heartfelt love.
O ! then how rapt in bliss we are,
The highest that on earth we prove!
Ye who've bask'd in its bright beam,—
Felt its soothing influence—say,
When does the world less joyous seem,
Than when your home-light is away.

I have heard that joyous strain ;
I have seen that blessed light ;
It hath often eased my pain,
Lighted up my darkest night.
And I tell the world that nought,
(Wise ones ! shake your heads—so wise !)
With half such happiness is fraught ;—
Nought on earth that I so prize.
Ay, smile at weakness, an' ye will,
Though life is sweet, again I say,
Its purest bliss is wanting still,
If the loved-one is away.

THE HOLMFIRTH FLOOD.

WRITTEN ON VISITING THE SCENE OF THE AWFUL FLOOD, AT HOLMFIRTH,
FEBRUARY, 1852.

In gloomy grandeur have the clouds for days
Roll'd o'er the heights that guard the vale of Holme.
For days the rain across the moorlands wild
Has swept incessantly. The mountain streams
Dash down their pathways as if all pursued
By moorland furies ;—driven from their heights
Into the vales below, to seek a home
In calmer scenes. Downward do they dash,
Foaming with rage, and with the sweeping blasts,
Which howl portentous, join their maddened cry
Of proud defiance 'gainst the threatening sky.

The mass of congregating waters meet,
In wild commotion, in the mountain gorge,
Prepared, when gathered in their mighty strength,
To rush upon the vale, and carry death
And fierce destruction in their fearful flow.
Lo! higher, and still higher do they rise,
And, in the shadow of the beetling crags,
Resemble Lethe in their gloomy depths ;
While from their troubled heart is heard to come
The cry for victims from insatiate Death,
Who arms his ministers for their dread work.

Devoted vale ! lulled by the storm to rest,
Soon are thy scenes of rural quietude,
And pure domestic bliss, to be assailed
By mortal woe ;—by a relentless foe,
Who breaks all ties, and lays all comforts low ;
And yet, thou know'st it not. O, mighty God !
Must these, thy creatures, perish in their sleep ?
Oh ! must they wake no more to life on earth ?
Must they not see the coming spring, nor feel
The flush of nature in her joyous youth ?
Must they be swept away in all their sins,
And, disembodied spirits, wake before

The Throne they dread, to hear unwarned their doom ?
Save, save the wicked for the righteous' sake !
Nor let thy baleful, pent-up thunders break
On their unconscious heads ! Oh ! pleading vain !
As on the plains where stood, in all their wealth
And wickedness, the cities of the east ;
In vain, the venerable patriarch,
In sympathy for their inhabitants,
Did intercede ; so here too hath gone forth
(Let Earth not question Heaven's supreme decrees)
The fiat of the dread Eternal Power.
For see ! behind a rolling cloud of mist,
The waters, having burst the massive banks,
Their dreadful work begin, and with the sound
Of deep reverberating thunder, sweep
Along their destined course. The mighty oaks,
That to the earth's foundations fast have twined
Their thousand roots, are in their furious grasp
All seized, and like the tiny river flag,
Are borne upon the bosom of the deep.
The rocks, that reared to heaven their giant form,
And laughed, in proud defiance, when the storm
Has raged in fury round them, from their seats
Are hurled, and thunder down the gloomy vale.

Still onward rolls the mighty flood, and spreads
Wild devastation in its dreadful course.
And hark ! the watchman lifts his warning voice !
Above the storm is heard his trumpet blast :
“ He comes ! the storm-sprite comes ! flee for your
lives.”

And now, oh ! what a scene doth fill the eye !
‘Tis midnight, but the moon through murky clouds
Sheds her pale beams. Yon well-built fabric stems
The flood a moment, then with a loud crash
It sinks, and all is gone. The homes of men
Are deluged in the angry waves, and shrieks
Of mortal terror through the vale resound.
Yes, homes which a few hours before had smiled
In the enjoyment of the richest bliss
That earth affords, are now the watery graves
Of their possessors ; and their hopes and fears
Of future life, are whelmed in sudden death.

“ My child ! my child ! ” the drowning mother cries,
And clasps it in her death-throes to her breast,
Then sinks to rest beneath the sedgy bank
Of the fell stream that murdered her ; or, borne
Along the flood, doth find a resting place
In some deep ocean cave. “ Save, father, save ! ”

In piercing accents shrieks the dying girl,
As she is by the raging torrent torn
From his endeared embrace; while grappling with
Its mighty force, intent to save his child,
His deep paternal love his ruin proves—
Death is too strong—he sinks to rise no more.
The girl was to be wed the morrow morn,
And in the height of hope she fell asleep;
Bright visions of her future joys had blessed
Her dreams. She thought to rise and realize
Her blooming hopes; alas! she woke to die.

Still onward does the reckless monster roam;
Now, he invades the precincts of the dead,
And, not content with the dread havoc made
With precious life, he rushes to the tomb,
And drags from thence the livid, mouldering corpse,
And bears the lidless coffin to the door
Of those who wail, in utter wretchedness,
The loss irreparable they have sustained.

See, now it nears the hamlet, doomed to share
The horrors of its wild, destructive power;
The villagers, alarmed, flee in dismay—

Flee for their lives, and leave the dear, dear homes,
That hitherto have sheltered from life's ills.
Some, horror-stricken, stay awhile to gaze
Upon the impetuous flood, but, caught within
Its whirling, whelming rush, they pass away,
And hopelessly are lost. Home after home
Is deluged in its swell. Life after life
Is sacrificed, and Moloch is appeased ;—
The dreadful tragedy is now complete.
The waters spread into the opening plain,
And seek their level in the far-off main.

Remorseless torrent ! what a scene hast thou
Left in thy gloomy wake ! How doth the howl
Of desolation sound through every wood,
And naked glen, and devastated field !
Gaunt Ruin, rearing his black form to heaven,
Bestrides the wreck-strewed vale, and, with a laugh
Of proud derision, points us to his prey ;
While Nature, weeping o'er the dreadful scene,
Leaves for a time her once beloved retreat.

How doth the heart of the beholder swell
With grief unspeakable, as he surveys

The vale from some high-jutting crag, and thinks
Of those who lie entombed beneath the mass
Of mingled wreck!—he scarce can see for tears.
In wrapt imagination back he turns
His gaze, and sees in awful grandeur roll
That wilderness of waters which o'erwhelmed
The earth, and swept all being from its face.
Then down Time's vale he wings, in thought, his
flight,
And sees a mightier deluge—one of fire;
And Heaven's dread angel, who but waits the word
Of the Omnipotent to light
The rolling world in its consuming flames:
And, as he slowly leaves the awful spot,
His saddened heart communues in prayer with heaven.

AN INVOCATION TO DUTY.

ONWARD, Soul ! into the field—
The battle-field of life !
O ! never to the foeman yield—
On, on into its strife.
Go forth in all the strength of youth ;
Be something, dare and do ;
Up ! arm thee in the mail of truth,
And thou shalt conquer too.

O ! shrink not from the enemy,
Though numerous and strong :
Let faith in God encourage thee ;
Be hope thy constant song.

Look forward ! angels beckon thee ;
Behold the conqueror's crown !
Fight on into eternity,
And it shall be thine own.

O ! the bliss of being, when
We're faithful to our trust ;
For, when we quit ourselves as men,
We trample in the dust
All those who dare oppose to bind
From glory and from fame,
And in the firmament of mind,
We write our deathless name.

Then venture, Soul, into the storm—
The stern, yet noble strife !
Brave Death ! heed not his upraised arm,
And win immortal life.
Go forth in all the strength of youth,
Be something, dare and do ;
Up ! arm thee in the mail of truth,
And thou shalt conquer too.

TO MY NATIVE VALE.

SWEET vale ! I love thee dearly,
Shrined in thy holy calm,
I listen late and early
To the inspiring psalm
That from thy bosom rises high,
A daily anthem to the sky.

I gaze upon thy beauty,
Thy music never palls,
But nerves me for the duty
To which life ever calls :

Thou givest to my heart a joy,
Which all life's cares can ne'er destroy.

The glens, the heath-clad mountains,
The aged hawthorn tree,
The rills, the mossy fountains—
All have their charms for me ;
In calm or storm, by night or day,
I love in their lone haunts to stray.

How bright the sunset glory
Upon thy woodland stream !
What feelings now come over me,
While, lost in the bright dream
Of early days, I walk once more
Along its green, romantic shore.

I prize those youthful feelings—
Those aspirations grand ;
To me they were revealings
Of the future spirit-land ;
Their influence sheds around my way
The glory of immortal day.

When, as the day-beam fadeth,
The Moon walks forth serene,
O what a power pervadeth
The fair, enchanting scene !
How is the spirit caught on high,
And pants to know life's mystery !

I wish not wealth nor splendour,
Nor pomp of earthly power ;
To me 'tis wealth to wander,
At morn or evening hour,
Beneath the sky, upon the sod,
Where first my thoughts were led to God.

Long as I live, dear valley,
Where'er my lot be cast,
While recollections rally
Round the standard of the past ;
Thee will my heart still fondly prize,
Earth's first and only paradise.

“THE NOTES, SWEET BIRDS.”

THE notes, sweet birds, ye raise so high,
My bosom fill with grief;
In vain, to cheer my heart ye try—
Ye *cannot* give relief.
No, no, ye bring to mind those hours,
For ever passed away,
I spent among these woodland bowers,
In wild and careless play.

Those hours when I, with early feet,
Strayed through this leafy grove,
The first soft blush of morn to greet—
To hear sweet lays of love ;
Or watch the golden sunbeams sip
The dew-drops bright and clear,
Which trembled on each floweret's lip,
That bloomed and blossomed here.

Those hours, when her kind, cheerful voice—
Her heart-enlivening smile,
Whom I had made my early choice,
Would life's dark seasons guile—
When bright and cloudless was our sky,
And every bliss was ours,—
But ah ! for ever have gone by
Those calm, those happy, hours.

The warblers that so gaily sung,
The flowers that blossomed here,
And breathed their sweets when I was young,
Will never more appear.
The heart that beat for me alone—
The fair and cheerful brow

Of her, whom once I call'd my own,
In dust are now laid low.

And vainly yonder sun now shines ;
In vain the flow'ret's bloom ;
My lonely heart in sorrow pines,
Nor can they cheer its gloom.
And your blithe songs, that rise so high,
Sweet birds, oppress with grief,
In vain, to cheer my heart ye try—
Ye cannot give relief.

“THE GOOD OLD TOWN.”

HOME of my fathers ! thee I hail !
O ! fondly do I gaze on thee ;
For in my free, my native vale,
Are treasures dear to me.
Lo ! smiling in the morning sun,
In the sweet calm of days now flown,
A pleasant sight to look upon,
Is still “the good old town.”

Though eyes are dim and hearts are still,
For ever hushed in death's repose,
Whence flowed a pure and constant rill
Of balm to heal my woes.

Though Time hath swept some joys away,
Still laughing skies are o'er thee thrown,
Like those that in my boyhood's day,
O'erspread “the good old town.”

To distant lands let others roam ;
The peaceful vale my sires have trod,
Through life shall be my happy home—
My grave, its verdant sod.
At sight of thee dear memories start,
Bright as the flowers around thee strewn,
That bind, as years roll on, my heart
More firm to thee “old town.”

Long as thy steeples flood the air
With Sabbath harmonies and peace,
O, may Heaven hear thy voice of prayer!
Its blessings still increase.
May thy brave sons join heart and hand
To guard those precious rights their own,—

Prove, like the hills that round thee stand,
Thy bulwarks, "good old town."

May pleasure, innocence, and love,
Be ever by thy youths possessed;
And peaceful years e'er gently move
Thine aged to their rest.
Thus may heaven's blessing rest on thee,
When wild flowers o'er my grave have grown,
And other bards, in numbers free,
Sing of the "good old town."

THE LAST FOND LOOK.

“ YET just once more
I fain would scan, dear vale, thy beauties o'er ;
I fain these fond, admiring eyes would cast
O'er childhood's home and scenes ! 'twill be my last
Fond gaze—for ere the shades of eve come on,
And hide from view these flowers—I shall be gone.
I feel life's ebbing sands are nearly run :
For me no more will rise yon morning sun ;
And when the warbling songsters tune their lay,
In yonder shady bowers, the live long day ;
And when the forest-bee, at rosy morn,
Shall wind, with ceaseless hum, its tiny horn ;
And when the sigh of trees, the flow of rills,
With sweetest music this green valley fills ;

Or when the jocund shouts of cheerful mirth
Shall echo to the laughing sky from earth,
This heart, unconscious of that joy will be
Sepulchred 'neath yon church-yard alder tree.
The balmy breeze may run her fingers through
Each holly bush, or wild fantastic bough,
'Till each breathes harmony—the flowers there,
With richest fragrance may perfume the air ;
The early lark, wing'd for the orient skies,
Her matin-song may warble as she flies ;
The nightingale, in yonder distant grove,
At eventide may sing her song of love ;
The butterfly may wanton in its play,
And bask and flutter in the sun's bright ray ;
Bright Sol may tip with gold those verdant hills,
And Cynthia silver o'er those murmuring rills ;
Her beams may dance upon the rippling brook,
Yet I on these dear scenes no more may look.

Adieu, blest scenes ! to me for ever dear ;—
For ye fond memory sheds her warmest tear ;
For ye again the silver wires among
My hand I throw, to weave my parting song.
Adieu ! ye crystal rills, ye rippling streams,

That blest, with music sweet, my childhood's dreams ;
Ye free-wing'd zephyrs, fresh and cool, that blow—
That erst did fan my warm and youthful brow.
Adieu ! ye floral meads, and verdant woods,
Ye mountain torrents, and ye vernal floods,
Ye purple peaks, deep dells, and sylvan bowers,
Where I ere-while have spent my happiest hours.
Adieu ! ye friends of youth, ye faithful few,
In love unchanging, and in friendship true,
Whose eyes would ever lighten when I came,
For ever 'midst life's changes still the same,
Who ever more would consolation pour
Into my aching breast—and in the hour,
The darkest hour of chill adversity
Would ever breathe the kindest sympathy.
Farewell ! dear friends,—a few more tears to shed,
And I shall mingle with the silent dead ;
But though the ties be broke that bound us here,
We yet, blest thought ! may meet in yon bright sphere."

Thus poured the poet forth his mournful song ;
He was but young, and with a faltering tongue
He gave expression to his last adieu !
To the dear vale he ne'er again might view.

THE MOORLAND HEATHER.

Yes ! that day I still remember,
When, with light and gladsome hearts,
We two walked, in bright September,
Far from towns and crowded marts.
O ! that golden sunshine's glow,
Warms and cheers my bosom now.

O ! what music woke each green grove,
As we slowly passed them by ;
How the warblers trilled their true love,
Perched on wavy branches high ;

How our spirits, gay and free,
Drank that soothing melody!

Pure and playful flowed that river
Down its winding rocky bed,
Brawling, gliding, restless ever,
Swiftly on its course it sped.
Brightly did the sparkling spray
Glitter in the sunset's ray.

Far and wide the purple mountains
Cast around their mellow shade ;
And the limpid, mossy fountains
Soothing, melting music made.
Round us forest flow'rets grew,
And around us odours threw.

Roses, woodbines wild together
Were by Nature interwreathed ;
And *thy* bonnie Moorland heather
A refreshing fragrance breathed.
O ! that golden sunshine's glow
Plays around my spirit now,—

Lighting up my hours of sorrow,
Pouring balm into my soul,
Brightly gilding each to morrow,
As they ever onward roll.
Tell me, kind one, dost not thou
Feel that cheering sunshine's glow?

When shall we two meet together,
Dear one, in that flowery plain?
When shall sight of moorland heather
Bless and cheer thy heart again?
It ne'er may be, and *yet* it *may*.
Hope! and cast thy griefs away.

THE WOODLAND HOME.

EMBOSOMED in a silent vale,
Surrounded by deep dells,
Lone stands the happy sylvan home
Where gentle Laura dwells.
The richest flower-gems trellis round
That peaceful Eden bower ;
And woodland voices there breathe forth,
A spiritual power.

A bright translucent stream rolls by
Its restless amber flood,

And joins its music with the songs
That echo through the wood.
There undulating, flowery meads
In all their beauty lie ;
And balmy zephyrs softly bear
Their incense to the sky.

Oh ! sweetly smiles that bower when bathed
In morning's golden sheen ;
And blithely on the wings of hope
The moments pass serene.
Yes ! 'tis a place of light and love,
From morn to evening pale ;
For sorrow flies before the smile
Of Laura of the vale !

Soft as the roseate beams of morn
That light the eastern sky,
Are those kind gleams that ever dart
From her expressive eye ;
And gently, as at eventide,
When gush the streams of song,
The tender tones of joy and love
Fall from her silvery tongue.

And she is merry as the rill,
Which through the valley flows,
And rivals every graceful bloom
That there in beauty blows.
And in the joyous harmony
Which round that Eden floats,
In mellow, soul-subduing strains,
She blends the sweetest notes.

O ! sweetly smiles that bower when bathed
In morning's golden sheen ;
And blithely on the wings of hope
The moments pass serene.
Yes ! 'tis a place of light and love
From morn to evening pale ;
For sorrow flies before the smile
Of Laura of the vale !

THE WOODLAND DELL.

To thy loved shade, lone woodland dell,
I bend my weary feet ;
Ah ! there is still that crystal well,
And here's my mossy seat ;
And ye, bright flowers, that seem to look
At me, so coy, so shy,
I see you in that fairy nook,
And read your laughing eye.
O ! ye possess a modest charm,
A gentle winning power,
That rush around the heart so warm !—
Who does not love a flower ?

And your loud pipings, songsters free,
O ! how they charm the ear !

So rich, so full of melody,
They draw the blissful tear.
Your singing blends so softly sweet
With those clear singing rills ;
And with a melting, rapturous beat
Of joy, the glad heart fills.
I never yet repaired to thee,
Thou lovely woodland dell,
But feelings have come over me
No tongue may ever tell.

The birds, the rills, the quivering leaves,
The flowers that bloom so fair,
Impress the soul ; the bosom heaves
With untold joy ; while care,
Surrounded with the rushing tide,
Is deluged in its swell.
The feelings felt when here I've hied,
No tongue may ever tell.
Life is a struggle from our birth ;
A chequered scene at best ;
But in these pleasant nooks of earth,
We find a transient rest.

TWILIGHT THOUGHTS.

ETERNITY!—the everlasting home
Of souls—how faintly grasped by deepest thought!
While rarely, O ! how rarely, man is brought
To stretch his mind beyond the starry dome
That veils from mortal gaze the residence
Mysterious of souls. How slowly sense
Drinks spirit in !—yet how the pure in heart
Hang on the Eternal's lips! All things impart
To them some knowledge of His glorious ways:
The note of bird—the simplest flower—can raise
The lowliest spirit to that glorious throne,
Whence, free as beams of morning light, is strown,
Throughout the mighty universe profound,
The creature's happiness in one eternal round.

When day's last vestige softly steals away,
And from the deep'ning vault bright Hesper's ray
Darts down into the lonely woodland pool,
O, then what joy!—while odorous and cool
Around the weary spirit, plays the gale
Of ev'ning, as adown the flowery vale
Invisible it sails, with gentle sigh—
To plunge into the depths of some lone wood,
And, in the embrace of soothing solitude,
Commune with thought. While the propitious sky
Throws round the evening landscape rose-bloom hues
Of mellow light, and Nature's charms infuse
Into the mind a sweet and tranquil joy,
Which she doth evermore impart without alloy.

"Tis wise in man, betimes, thus to retreat
From busy life, and stay the fluttering beat
Of his sad heart,—to view the chequer'd past
Of life, in self-communion, and cast
His thoughts above. Few through the open gates
Of Nature's temple step, though Wisdom waits,
And there lifts up her voice to passers by,
And graciously would lead them to her high
And sacred altar;—at whose holy shrine

Are kindled in the breast those hopes divine,
That bless earth's weary pilgrims on their way
To purer temples in the skies. All *may*,
But few *do*, enter there. "The word is nigh,
E'en in their mouths." They choose their wayward
paths and die.

But from the outer world, great God, I come
To the high altar thou hast raised. As flame
Seeks yonder sun—as streams for ever roam
On to their ocean home,—I come to claim,
With humble spirit, and with reverend awe,
Thy nature and Thy love. A part of Thee,
I come to Thee, and ask that I may know,
Without partaking the forbidden tree,
More of the great I AM. With burning thirst
I wait—a thirst such as no earthly stream
Can e'er allay.—My eager soul would burst
Its mortal bonds, and on some bright sunbeam,
Would track the shining way, and joyful rise
To its high home amid the glories of the skies.

Yet even there, my trembling spirit asks
"What art Thou, dread Eternity?"—A tongue

Of flame disparts the mystic cloud that masks
The Eternal's throne from the encircling throng,
And thence a voice, that moves all Heaven, proclaims
In thunder, "God ! and God is all in all !"
Then why should earth's vain blandishments enthrall
Th' immortal soul, where this world's mightiest names
Live but a moment in duration's round.
O ! let me faithful evermore be found
Fast by thy throne, O God ! and in its light
Behold each scene of earth,—and higher climb
The hill of life, until, from Pisgah's height,
I view the land beyond the dark frontiers of time.

SPRING.

Lo ! yonder on the south winds borne,
A beautiful maiden comes,
To cheer the hearts of those that mourn,
And enliven dreary homes.

Careering high from climes afar,
The fair one, in pride and power,
Sweeps fleetly on in golden car,
Adorned with blossom and flower.

From yonder shining portals, down
She hies to shadowy plains ;
And Winter, with a parting frown,
Yields up the envied reins.

Through barren woodlands—bloomless bowers
Passing—she scatters balmy breath ;
And lo ! sweet buds, and sweeter flowers,
Start as from shades of death.

The valleys don their robes of green ;
Streamlets break their icy chain ;
And mountains, bathed in golden sheen,
Lift in pride their heads again.

O ! vernal beauty's first bright gleam,
Bursting on the town-pent heart,
Exhales grief's tears ; and all things seem
A hopeful influence to impart.

Hail ! beauteous Nature ! boundless scourge,
Ever fresh, of blissful thought ;
For ever teaching in thy course,
Wisdom's lore ne'er fully taught.

Pure fount of ever flowing streams,
Gurgling through the heart's rude soil,
With gentle music, wak'ning dreams—
Charming dreams—that lighten toil.

O ! cold the heart that does not love
Beauty so serene as thine ;
And dull the heart that cannot prove
Pleasures such as now thrill mine.

In every season, thy fair charms
Sway the mind with gentle power ;—
Soothe to peace life's rude alarms,
And brighten up its saddest hour.

¶irs.

THE DYING SISTER.

COME, sister mine !
One parting sight at these dear scenes below,—
One glance I fain would take ere hence I go,—
 Ere they are hidden from my sight.
Come, gently bear me to my favourite seat,
Whence through the leafy lattice I may greet
 Morn's rosy streaks of cheerful light,
 And view the grove
 Where our fond love
Has oft encircled us, and led our thoughts above.

Oh, what a dawn !
'Tis such a fitting scene to cheer the gloom
Of my lone passage to the darkling tomb,
Where I must shortly sink to rest.
Hark ! how the stream of yonder fountain plays
The well-remembered tunes of "other days,"
When, fondly on each other's breast,
We oft reclined,
And ever kind,
We breathed our thoughts and feelings to each other's
mind.

See how the sun,
In splendour rising, pours her sparkling tide
Of golden light adown the dewy side
Of that green hill, which now appears
Like one huge pyramid of brilliant pearls !
And see, ascending slow the azure curls
Of smoke, from that sweet home, which rears
Its humble head
O'er its fair bed
Of cottage flowers, that all around their odours
shed.

It rises like
The holy incense of believing prayer,
From off the sacred household altar there,
Which—from humility's low vales,
Ascending gently through the air serene
To Him who dwells the cherubims between—
Before the Throne of Love prevails ;
When troubles cease,
And gentle peace
Comes to the grief-fraught heart, and gives a sweet
release.

Now on the ear,
From yonder sleeping hamlet, faintly starts
The busy hum of life, and buoyant hearts
Undreaming yet of future ill,
Begin their daily round of cheerful toil,
Nor wish to wander from their native soil,
Their few and low desires to fill ;
But sunny rays
Light all their days,
And blest contentment scatters flowers through all
their ways.

And there still lies
The shady wood-path, leading to the glen
We loved ; 'tis skirted still with flowers, as when
We trod it in the days gone by.
And by its side still flows that limpid stream,
Discoursing music,—glitt'ring in the beam
Of morn, beneath the dappled sky ;
And songsters free,
From bush and tree,
Attune their lays, and fill the vale with melody.

'Tis such a morn
As we erewhile have spent together, love,
When through the scenes delighted we would rove,
And sweetly dream of joys to come ;
But ah, 'tis over now—those times are past,
And hark ! the gentle summons comes at last
That calls me to my future home.
O, sister dear !
Art thou still near ?
Come to my heart—nay, weep not ! thou hast nought
to fear ;

For listen how
The gladsome strains of earth now sweetly blend
With heavenly harmony; and earthward bend
Bright visitants their shining way.
Come, let me lean my head upon thy breast,
And, like the soft tints of the fading west,
There close my sweet, but short-lived day.
Yes, sister mine!
There I'd recline,
And breathe my soul away near that dear heart of
thine.

THE BETTER SISTER.

ALAS ! she's gone !

The fountain of her heart has ceased to pour
Its stream of sympathy around the bower
Of love, in which we used to dwell.
The golden bowl is broken ; and the cords—
The silver cords are loosed ! Earth affords
No other being that I loved so well.

Her gentle soul,
Beyond control

Of earthly things, has now attained life's happy goal;

And I am left
A cheerless wanderer along the way,
The dreary way of life ; for night and day
I miss her well-beloved form.
As erst, the sun to me shines not so bright ;
Nor does the face of Nature charm my sight ;
And I must meet each bitter storm
Of life alone,
With none to own
The young bereaved one, or breathe one soothing
tone.

I pace the room
Where she in resignation bowed her head
To Heaven's high will, and meekly joined the dead ;
I see the flowers she called her own,
Her favourite bird—her books—her wonted chair ;
I sometimes fancy that I see *her* there,
But when I start, the vision's flown ;
The moaning blast
Then hurries past
Our ivied home, and says that nought on earth can
last.

I seek the woods,
The flowery fields, the stream, the leafy bowers,
The silent glens, where all the sunny hours
Of life, in bliss, were passed away.
But silent glen, nor flower bespangled field,
Nor bowery wood, alive with song, can yield
My heart's dear flower—all seem to say
“ She is not here ; ”
Then sorrow's tear
Bedews my cheek as thought looks at the flower-decked bier.

But cruel Death,
Thou offspring of foul Sin, though thou on earth
Mayst often crush our fondest hopes at birth,
Thou canst not close the road to Heaven.
No, tyrant ! though our nature shrinks thy grasp,
Yet never soul by faith the cross did clasp,
And 'gainst thy power has vainly striven.
Then, soul, hope on !
Though all is gone,
That made earth dear, thou yet shall meet thine
absent one.

LIFE'S PASSAGE.

FAR across life's dreary waters
Oft we cast a fearful eye,
As the wreck of the disasters
Of other voyagers float by.
Anxiously we strain our sight
Through the thick veil of the night,
To catch the welcome beacon-light,
To guide us into port.
The low'ring skies, the raging ocean,
Every blast, and every motion
Of our leaky bark—the sport
Of angry billows—fills with fear,
That every wave
Will be our grave,
And bury us from all we hold most dear.

Through the wilderness of waters
Ever on and on we float.

Over mountain-waves, through valleys,
Onward drives our storm-tossed boat.
Powerless through numbing fear,
We gaze, but have not heart to steer,
And on into the region drear
Of dark despair we bound.
Above the storm is heard the cry,
The cry of mortal agony,
For help—but none is found.
A shriek, a plunge, then over all
Our joys and woes
The waters close,
When low is laid the weary head,
Upon its cold, cold ocean bed,
To wait the world-awakening trumpet-call.

Must life thus aimless pass away ?
Is such to be its close ?
Oh ! must there dawn no calmer day
To give the soul repose ?
Listless are we thus to lie,
With the fatal Maelstrom nigh,
That whirls into eternity,
And yet not strike an oar ?

List to the warning voice of Heaven,
Through yon dark clouds all thunder-riven,
 And in the ocean's roar :
 " Lift up your heads ! behold afar,
Bethlehem's bright and guiding Star
 Shines to illume
 The midnight gloom,
Which hopes of future safety doth entomb !"

Mortal ! invoke his aid whose hand
 Spread out life's mighty sea,—
Who winds and billows doth command,—
 Who sets the hopeless free.
Say not, " I'm but a helpless worm,"
But nerve thy arm for every storm ;
And in God's strength meet every form
 Of ill that can befall.
Through faith in Him the darkness flies,
The thunders cease, and smiling skies
 Shed their blessed light o'er all.
'Tis faith gives all our energy
 Amid the strife
 Of mortal life ;
And to our eye unfolds its mystery.

THE BARD TO HIS LYRE.

O, hither waft, ye balmy gales !
O, hither waft your rich perfume
In undulating sweeps, from vales
Where flow'rets fresh and fragrant bloom !
O, come in whispers soft and low !
O, come disport around my brow !
And on your pinions bear along
Yon merry wood-nymph's mystic song.

Far from the world's alluring wiles,
Where deadliest hate is hid by smiles ;
Far from its fever and its strife,
Its smooth deceit, its vices rife,
How pleasant 'tis to sit and hear
Yon mountain rills dissolving sound,
As now 'tis heard, distinct and clear,
Then melts away in glens around ;

To watch yon eastern gold-tinged braid
Into the gathering twilight fade ;
And while gay songsters merrily
Attune their songs to liberty,
To quaff the rosy nectarous draught
Of health, the balmy breezes waft.

Spirit of life and love ! impart
Thy soothing measures to my heart ;
O ! let me thy sweet influence taste !
Preside thou o'er the rural feast ;
Touch with thy wand these duteous eyes ;
Bid all thy sylvan beauties rise ;
And from thy richly-deck'd parterre,
Teach me to cull a garland fair
Of glowing Poesy, and inspire
With music sweet my simple lyre.

O, simple lyre ! thy music oft
Hath stay'd the throbings of this heart
Thy plaintive tones, so sweet, so soft,
Have often eased its painful smart,
And brought the balm of kind relief
When overwhelm'd with deepest grief.

The busy world may know thee not,
Nor care for thy unskilful strains ;
But, O ! whatever be my lot—
While memory her seat retains—
Till marks the sculptur'd stone the spot
Where deep in earth lie my remains,
Nought shall on earth our friendship sever.
We'll journey on, united ever.

For thou, when other friends have ceased to smile,
Hast never failed the weary hour to 'guile ;
When others have unkind, inconstant proved,
Thy tender strains my inmost soul have moved.
However deep the sorrow of my heart,
I need but gently sweep my hand athwart
Thy tuneful strings, and my freed soul upsprings
Into the realms of hope on joyous wings.
In days gone by, how oft thy music wild
Hath wrapt in dreams the visionary child !
And now, e'en now, amidst life's cares and pains,
With tears of bliss, I own thy magic strains ;
Thou charm'st the present, and recall'st the past ;
I love thee, and will love thee to the last.

St. George.

SONNETS.

PASSING MOODS AND THOUGHTS.

TEMPTATION.

THE by-path leads to a far fairer clime
Than e'er by mortal viewed ;—more sweet its flowers
Than ever gladden earth ;—more bright its showers
Of light than fall at richest sunset time.
Hark ! from the still, enchanted grounds there come
The sweetest strains that ever smote the ear,
Or fir'd the heart, or drew the exquisite tear ;
The syren's song allures man to her home.
Her charms lay hold of every power and sense ;
But soon as felt is gone the transient bliss ;
They change. Ah ! listen to the serpent's *hiss*.
Lo ! darkness shrouds the dream-land, deep and dense.
O ! brother, pray thou in temptation's hour !
She sings but to allure—allures but to devour.

A RURAL GLIMPSE.

My pathway led along the mountain's brow,
The sky's clear azure scarcely hid from view
The spirit-land afar ; while through the rosy hue
That veiled the West, with a celestial glow,
The distant stars, like angel eyes, looked down
Upon the inspiring scene. Woods, meadows,
streams,
Diversified the winding vales ; sunbeams
Flash'd round their lingering light on the far town,
And hamlets girt with orchards, smiling in
Their rural beauty. Peaceful did they seem,
And lovely. O ! how sweet was it to dream
Those quiet homes had ne'er been reached by sin.
Beauty still walks the earth ; and to the pure
Unfold her charms. He who is pure is never poor.

THE MIDNIGHT WHISPER.

O EARTH, earth, earth! speed on thy destined course ;
Sweep round the cycles which thou hast to make ;
Against the unknown land I hear thy waters break—
O tide of life—and my heart's longing's gather force.
This midnight stillness settles on my soul
Deep awe ; in sleep are wrapt my fellow-men,
Nor know that they on earth may wake again,
While from Time's promontory I the scroll
Of dark futurity would trace, and know
My being's reason, and my being's end.
O ! who in life's great conflict can befriend ?
This silence fires desire to its intensest glow.
Down from the midnight heavens a star-voice fell,
“Put thou thy trust in God, ‘who doeth all things
well.’ ”

IMAGINATION AND PIETY.

O glorious power! the faculty supreme
Of all the powers that God to man has given !
Lo ! on the shining battlements of heaven
I see thy form in beauty robed ;—thy theme
Of contemplation—human destiny.
As o'er the vast profound of coming time
Thy piercing vision sweeps, with hopes sublime
Thou pointest Man to immortality.
And near thy side is one whose looks of love
Would win an erring world back to its God ;
To Mercy's sceptre change the chastening rod
Stern Justice wields, and lead man to his home above.
O beauteous ones ! e'er blend your charms of price-
less worth !
These win the heart and those to happiness give birth.

APRIL.

How beautiful the country ! what sweet strains
Of melody fall on the listening ear !
What Eden glimpses everywhere appear,
Scattered o'er valleys, hills, and flower-strewed plains,
Filling the eye with beauty ! April reigns ;
Giving the earth fresh bloom—fresh smiles the sky,
And telling man that God still lives on high,
Who winter's gloom, and frosts, and dismal rains,
Can change into a spring of joyous hope.
Sweet voice of Nature, true ! but He must touch
Man's fount of feeling, and his eye ; or such
His blindness—so insensate, he would grope
His way in darkness and in misery,
Though treading Heaven's own bowers—surrounded
with its sky.

SCEPTICISM.

Doubt drives th' Eternal from his rightful throne ;
Creation's guidance leaves to Chance's power,
Controll'd by Passion every changeful hour ;
Makes life a thing mankind cares not to own ;
Shrivels the soul ;—before whom hope-light fades ;
Makes man a foam-bell on a stormy sea,
To burst 'mid lowering gloom and misery ;
Borne by oblivion's blast to endless shades.
Back, back, foul Demon ! to thy dismal place ;
Back Scepticism ! ring out thy laughing jeers !
The humblest child of faith thee never fears,
For he a thousand thousand ways can trace
To immortality :—a flower, a tear, a sigh,
Wake hopes within his heart that never, never die.

DESPAIR.

—

ETERNAL Spirit ! in my soul's deep gloom
I turn to thee ; for darkness, blacker far
Than Nature ever saw, doth every star
Of Hope blot from my mind's drear sky. Each bloom
That gladdened with its smile, or fragrant breath,
The solitary place, where vagrant thought
Was wont to rove so free, in vain is sought
To cheer the heart—all droops in silent death.
I turn to Thee, for thou alone canst roll
The baleful cloud away. No creature power
Can soothe me in this agonizing hour,
Or spread a sky of sunlight o'er my soul.
Oh ! come assuage the anguish of despair,
And turn its heavy groans into the voice of prayer.

LIFE.

THEY err who say the world is full of gloom,
That "man was made to mourn," and like a slave,
To struggle on through life, 'till in the grave
He findeth rest beneath oblivion's tomb.
The soul, with all her gathered strength, doth hurl
The monstrous thought into the loathsome deep
From whence it sprang, while God-ward she doth
keep
Her steadfast eye, and proudly doth unfurl
On Revelation's towering mount the flag
Of deathless hope, and in her agony
Would move the universe ere cease to be.
Life comes from God : and she the topmost crag
Of wildering thought will climb, till she hath found
Her source, and there she settles into peace profound.

SABBATH MORN.

God of the Sabbath ! O, how grand the swell,
This golden morn, of Nature's hymn of praise !
The universe is vocal, and doth raise
To Thee its pæans, who dost ever dwell
The cherubim between. Thou shinest forth
In glory, and with one broad, dazzling beam
Of light, thy truth, thy love, and beauty seem
Inscribed on the fair bosom of the earth.
So too thy children lift their hearts to thee
In songs of grateful praise. There still are those
Who find in sorrow, joy—in toil, repose,
By trusting Thee with their high destiny.
'Tis meet that earth's intelligence should raise
A nobler hymn than nature in its Maker's praise.

TO MY NIECE.

HEAVEN's richest blessing rest upon thee, niece!—
Thy every step of future life attend ;
And, like a ray of blessed sunlight, blend
With all its gloom, and fill thy heart with peace!
Thy opening years are beautiful as Spring ;
O may their dawn flush into Summer's prime,
Then melt to Autumn's rosy twilight time ;
And if thy sky by Winter's sable wing
A moment be o'erspread, still may the sun
Of piety dart through the cloud its ray,
And make life's close like one bright winter's day.
Thus, when thy joyous course on earth is run,
From some sweet valley may thy spirit rise,
Like holy incense, to the peaceful skies.

THE HUMAN SEASONS.

SPRING.

WELCOME life's beauteous Spring ! O priceless boon
To live for aye !—for ever growing up
To immortality. How sweet the cup
Of life ! Thus fair its morn, how grand the noon
Of splendour that will burst upon my soul !
Shine on, ye heavens ! and pour your blessed light
Around the heaven within. Bound with delight,
My heart, and let the tide of pleasure roll,
And bear me on to future bliss. The earth
Nurses her offspring with the tenderest care !
From Nature's heart love gushes ;—everywhere
I catch the bliss of life. O wondrous birth,
That opes to an eternity of joy !
O wondrous life, which Death itself cannot destroy !

THE HUMAN SEASONS.

SUMMER.

STEEP the ascent! yet, soul, thou must essay
To climb the highest and most distant height;
Through the dark cloud Hope's star glows clear
and bright,
Then on, though gaunt Despair across thy way
Rears up his huge obstructions mountains high.
Blending the glow of Manhood's primest blood
With that bright star, seize thou Heaven's offered
good!
O! gain the height! pass meaner glory by!
Then Summer beauties deck thy inner world;
The tree of knowledge yields a rich repast;
Thus strengthened, thou shalt brave earth's rudest
blast,
With triumph's flag unto the breeze unfurled.
The world may doubt it, but I tell thee, thou
Mayst wear an angel's diadem while here below.

THE HUMAN SEASONS.

AUTUMN.

SEASON of mellow shades and soothing dreams !
When Heaven's pure crescent lights the woodpaths
dim,
And harvestmen sing loud their evening hymn.
Enamoured of thy charms, by lonely streams,
In forest haunts, I love to walk with thee.
'Tis joy to see Earth's luscious bosom spread
With ripen'd fruit; to feel from want secure.
But there's a joy more lofty and more pure,
When through the fruitful realms of mind we tread,
And feel what then is ours will ever be.
O ! to have gained the height of a good life ;
And, girt in virtue's strength, with serene eye,
Look round our flower-world, or our thought-
starred sky ;
We then forgot the pain of all past strife.
'Neath a full harvest-moon we wander on,
Delighted with each beauteous scene we gaze upon.

THE HUMAN SEASONS.

WINTER.

COLD, damp, and dreary is the gloomy day ;
The naked vales are roofed with leaden clouds ;
The hills pour forth their snow-floods ;—mist
enshrouds

Earth's face, and man gropes on his cheerless way.
But wherefore cheerless ? Is the sunlight gone
Never to chase the deep oppressive gloom ?
What, though we travel to the darkling tomb,
Is life a blank ? shines not fair virtue's sun ?
Who can forget, sweet Spring ! thy sunny smile ?
Or, Summer ! the bright hopes which thou
inwrought ?

And of the bliss which thou, blithe Autumn !
brought,

Stern Winter cannot the brave heart despoil.
Oh, aged One ! let not thy faith *now* fail,
For hark ! Heaven's music blends with Winter's
loudest wail !

A WORD OF HOPE.

Hold on thy weary way, pilgrim of earth,
Hard though thy lot—by daily cares oppressed ;
Oh ! there is rest for thee—unbroken rest,
To recompense thy toil o'er life's rough path.
Gird up thy loins, and bravely venture on,
Nor vainly wish to know thy future lot ;
No, there is ONE by whom thou'rt not forgot;
With all thy heart trust that Almighty one.
Look round thee, earth will strengthen trust in him ;
With faith behold yon mighty glowing dome ;
Its stars will light thee to a blissful home,
And tune thy heart to sing a hopeful hymn.
Hope, brother, what is promised will be given,
This is the poet's pledge, " the tidings come from
Heaven."

TO MAY.

No. I.

Hail ! queen of flowery months, thy regal brow,—
Encircled with the glory of the year ;
Decked with its choicest gems—doth now appear,
To England's raptur'd eye, with such a glow
Of freshness, as doth thrill with bliss her heart,
Sending pulsations strong to the extremes
Of her broad lands. Waking from wintry dreams,
Her manly sons and beauteous daughters start
Again to gladden life ; for thy bland smiles
None can resist ; the music of thy voice,
So sweet ! all hear, and cannot but rejoice ;
E'en sickness, poverty, and want it wiles
From their foreboding fears, and woes of yesterday,
While drinking in thy beauty, O life-cheering May ! .

TO MAY.

No. II.

ALL hail ! for at thy advent are renewed
The thoughts, the innocence, and purity
Of childhood, which spring up from life's dark sea
An island steeped in rosy light, when viewed
'Neath thy calm skies. An island never more
To be approached, and, as we voyage on,
Not seldom hid by fogs ; but when hath shone
Thy sun, although no nearer to its shore,
How vivid has the glorious vision been
Of its enchanting scenes ! The woodnook spring ;
The forest haunts ; birds ever on the wing ;
The household voices ; the eternal green
Of watered valleys ; and the grandeur of its hills,
O how they melt the heart, and soften all its ills !

TO MAY.

No. III.

O'er the dark waters do we plough our way,
To the horizon's bright, but distant line
That marks the ocean's bound ; in strength divine
We urge our vessel—guided by the ray
Of childhood's star—to harbour in the bay
Of far eternity. Tempests may howl,
But only nerve the more each battling soul,
Intent to gain the everlasting May,
To spirits given in their high abode.

Myriads of voyagers do hail each year
Thy glad'ning influence with a welcome cheer ;
Myriads of voices grateful raise to God
Their songs for hopes revived, for love enkindled—
triumph won—
While treading thy green paths, and basking in thy sun.

TO A REDBREAST.

No. I.

O LONELY minstrel ! welcome sure thou art
To make thy home my garden's cloistered bower ;
Thy melancholy pipings have a power
To fill with universal love my heart.
O ! they have touched its sympathetic chords,
Which vibrate now with pleasure passing sweet,
And, as I watch thee in thy green retreat,
I love thee for the bliss thy song affords.
O soul-inspiring poesy ! the earth
Is full of thee ; throughout its wide domain
Thy charms extend ; and every tuneful strain,
And every view of those sweet charms, gives birth
To soft emotions, such as harmonize
With theirs who live and love beyond the starry skies.

TO A REDBREAST.

No. II.

THE ruddy streaks of morning's yellow light,
Appear to be reflected on thy breast;
And still, while Autumn folds his arms in rest,
And bright Aurora flushes on the sight,
Thou pourest forth into my eager ear,
Thy sweet unearthly music, which now comes
Mysteriously, as if from spirit-homes,
And from the heart's fount draws the silent tear.
The spirit with imaginings sublime
It fills, and longings undefinable
Are felt, as when the muffled sounds of deep-toned
bell
Are heard ; or 'gainst the wasting shores of Time,
We hear the surges of the unknown sea,
Low murmuring plaintively their mystic melody.

TO A REDBREAST.

No. III.

OF all the forest-warblers that have sung
Their lays when Spring inhabited the vale,
When Summer's charming beauties did prevail,
And smiling skies o'er all the prospect flung
A softening, soothing radiance,—not one
Remains save thee, thou sacred household bird ;
Yet through each season thy sweet note is heard,
Like Friendship's voice when parasites are gone ;
Soothing the heart where Winter's blighting breath
Sweeps ruthlessly across the landscape drear,
And one by one the friends whom we held dear
Have vanished in the misty vale of Death.
Sing on, sweet bird, within thy native dell,
Thine own sweet English melodies we love so well.

TO JOHN KEATS.

—

FANCY's magician, soul-entrancing Keats !
Like young Apollo on Parnassus' brow,
Thou stand'st sublime, and from those heights dost
 throw,
The richest flowers of poesy, whose sweets
Delight the soul. The trembling bosom beats
 With wildest transports, when thou wav'st thy wand ;
 For, lofty-visioned seer, at thy command
All forms of beauty, from their dim retreats,
Start forth upon the soul's astonished gaze
 In all their light ; and earth, and air, and sea,
 Their various treasures yield, great bard, to thee.
Thy radiant muse, full orb'd, dispels the haze
That shrouded them, and bursting on the world,
Are to the raptured mind bright mysteries unfurled.

TO THE MEMORY OF A FRIEND.

'Tis over, Allan, now—the struggle's o'er,
And thou hast heaved humanity's last sigh.
The noble spirit now has left our shore,
And passed through death's dark shades to realms
on high.
No trumpet-blast now echoes o'er thy grave,
In hollow gusts to sound thine earthly fame ;
But one who loved thee sings thine honoured name,
To tell how calm thou sank'st 'neath Jordan's wave.
Within the heart's shrine of a friendly few
Thou art embalmed, and yet dost live though dead ;
And, thinking of thy end, they lift their head
With glorious hopes, and thy bright path pursue.
O be thy spirit's zeal by them possessed,—
Be theirs thine honoured life,—thine heavenly rest.

AN EVENING THOUGHT.

BEHOLD yon glowing glorious orb of day,
As now in majesty he sinks to rest !
His rays embue with iris tints the west,
Which mark his splendour as he fades away.
As he his steady downward course is wheeling,
Through the vast mazes of ethereal blue,
From the dun east grey twilight now comes stealing,
Enveloping fair Nature's face from view.
So man, like day, is born, and blooms, and dies ;
His deeds, the one memorial of his being, live,
Which stamp his character as wise
And good, or darkest tints the picture give.
Virtue ! be thou the orbit of my sun,
Whose rays shine brightest when its course is run.

